



A  
Wanderer's  
Legend

MAXWELL SOMMERVILLE

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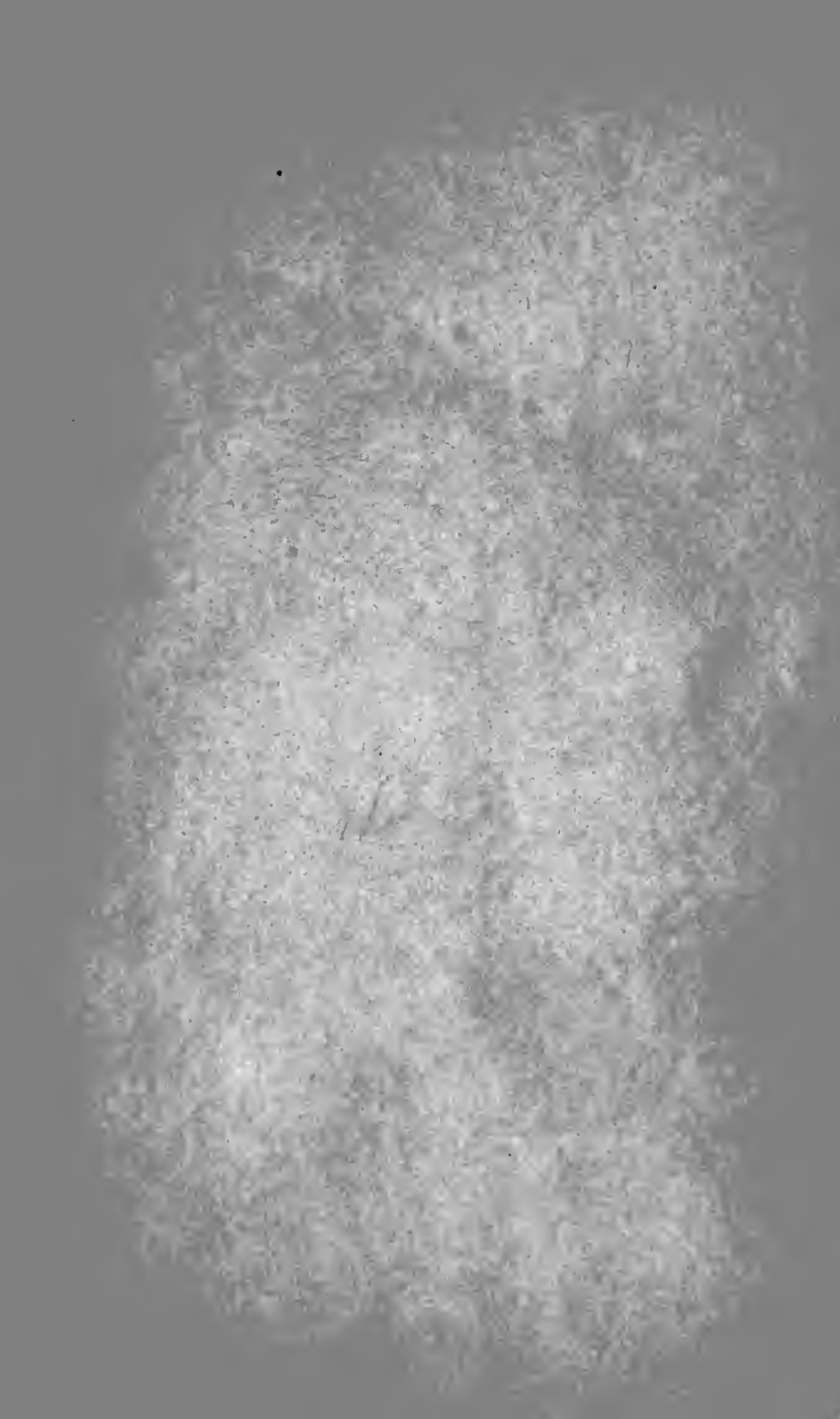
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Maxime R. Gommerville.  
Paris, 1. 1862.

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# WANDERER'S LEGEND

BY

MAXWELL SOMMERVILLE

PROFESSOR OF GLYPTOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA ; AUTHOR  
OF "ENGRAVED GEMS," "SANDS OF SAHARA," "SIAM," ETC. ;  
CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE SOCIÉTÉ ACADÉMIQUE  
DES SCIENCES, ARTS ET BELLES-LETTRES DU  
DÉPARTEMENT DE L'AUBE, FRANCE, ETC.



DREXEL BIDDLE, PUBLISHER

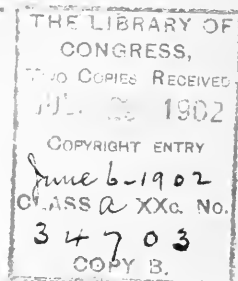
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PRINTED BY DREXEL BIDDLE, PHILADELPHIA, U. S. A.



a.m.s., nov. 7, 1929.

## Preface

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THE author refers the reader to Chapter 5, page 38:—

“Your reverences, many incidents of events that I relate to you from my personal recollection, may differ from the accounts in your sacred books. Yet I feel that these facts may interest you, coming as they do from one who witnessed those perilous scenes.”



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# A Wanderer's Legend

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## INTRODUCTORY

MAR SABA, a native of Cappadocia, a devout spiritual man, withdrew from the world towards the close of the fifth century.

About 483 A. D. he founded within a day's journey of Jerusalem the monastery of Deir-es-Sika, afterwards known as Mar Saba.

Mar Saba was Abbot of all the Anchorites of Palestine; his holiness was admired; hundreds wanted to follow him and become members of his retreat. He was a man who understood his fellow-men and chose with care the most steadfast followers for his cloister, who, in point of intellectuality, were superior to most religious orders thus associated.

A lifelong search for engraved gems and objects for the study of Oriental religions has presented many opportunities for the cultivation of an acquaintance with manuscripts of which many have been studied with pleasure.

Those of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries have especially proved of interest.

Printing with movable types being still in its incipency, recluses in monasteries continued to apply themselves diligently to writing carefully, and illuminating documents on parchment. Some centuries earlier, men had written or engraved records on the horns of animals, and those inscriptions were at times artistically done.

Among other interesting places visited on such expeditions, the monastery of Mar Saba in Syria is associated in my memory with my having found the material for this legend.

The monks, while showing the treasures of their library, were rather reluctant in allowing that one should handle and examine thoroughly their manuscripts.

Some years previously they had been robbed

by Arabs who too highly appreciated their store of parchments.

Among others they mentioned one of the sixteenth century, beautifully illuminated, entitled,

DISSERTATIO HISTORICA,  
DE  
JUDÆO NON MORTALI.

The text of this manuscript was in French with Latin notes.

One of the brethren, evidently a bookworm, assured me that as its theme of a Jew forever wandering had created much interest, there certainly existed other records of incidents in his wonderful and interminable life; he even informed me that travelers had spoken of seeing such a parchment in India.

Another year, investigations were continued in that interesting country, India. That journey brought me later on to Darjeeling, one of the last places in which to expect to find such treasures. However, in Darjeeling, the document was discovered, from the recollection of which is recorded this legend.

Many stations in India, where the heat is intense, are blessed with hill or mountainside resorts where man may restore his exhausted energies and for a while enjoy a change of temperature.

When wearied by the continued oppressive heat of Calcutta, crossing the broad Ganges and mounting by a toy-like railway, a delightful retreat was found on the hills at Darjeeling in view of Kànchanjanga. The veranda of the lodging commanded a view of the base of the natural amphitheatre, one of whose upper terraces was for the time our resting-place.

The acquaintance of an antiquary and a Buddhist priest who was preparing a friend to accompany him on a visit to the Grand Llama in Thibet enabled me to make important acquisitions and obtain valuable information. With this erudite Buddhist the great bazaar was visited. In that peculiar commercial centre, dealers in antiquities of every description assembled on certain days, coming from every direction in the country around and representing as many distinct types, yet all known by the common term



of "Hill people." This motley gathering offered for sale a variety of unique ornaments seldom to be found in Europe. After several unimportant visits and the examination of curious but uninteresting objects, finally the shamble of an Arab dealer was entered; he had lived among the Copts on the Nile. He was very courteous, and learning that I particularly occupied myself with the collection of such objects as might illustrate Oriental religions, he ransacked his chests, showing me many altar draperies and temple ornaments; a ring attracted my attention, its inscription in Arab, *La ilâha illa-allahu Muhammadu rasulu-l-lahi*, etc. There is no God but Allah, and Mahomet is his prophet, etc., etc.

The Arab remarked, "That ring pleases you; it has an inscription sacred to my co-religionists; my conscience will not permit me to sell it; as I see that you are an enthusiast, you shall take the ring, it is yours without price."

He then proceeded to exhibit a number of Arab manuscripts. Speaking at the same time about his religion, he said, "They who believe

in that mediator, Mahomet, know more of Christ than you may suppose."

The Arab continued as one having confidence in his own opinions and seemed desirous to state them.

"Many curious and interesting legends have been carefully preserved and handed down through Musselmans.

Although Mahomet appeared about seven centuries after the advent of the usually acknowledged Redeemer of man, we earnest followers of Mahomet believe that he came in special mercy to millions of devout Moslems.

We realize that our prophet has led us nearer to God. Our chronicles include incidents in the life of Christ. I must admit," said he, "that some of them are apocryphal; you Christians regard them as romances; yet you generally appreciate them because they are entertaining and often historic. You must admit," said he, "that some of their most peculiar traditions do contribute otherwise unrecorded facts."

After a while the Arab produced a parchment manuscript which he seemed equally unwilling

to part with; I began to wonder how the man was to make any trade, for he continued by praying me not to offer any price. He stood there before me reverently holding the parchment in his hands; it was, however, merely the reverence that a collector inherits who dabbles in the purchase and sale of such documents. Before unfolding it the old man began by relating to me the incidents leading to his possession of the legend which has furnished the romantic story so simply narrated.

At last he reluctantly permitted me to take it in hand. A man at four-score years is old and wrinkled, this manuscript almost four hundred years old showed its age only in its darkened parchment, here and there a curled or ragged corner and an occasional blurred line or two of text.

I found it deeply interesting and at first supposed it might be one of those the monks at Mar Saba spoke of, as in French of the fifteenth century with Latin notes and many illuminations which had been stolen from their library. As this was not illuminated in the manner described

by them, and though in French and Latin, it had copious notes in Coptic which, together with the fact that the Arab had resided on the Nile and had purchased it of a Coptic priest, proved conclusively that it had never been on the shelves in Mar Saba.

Noticing the interest with which I studied it, the old anitiquary promised me not only the privilege of looking it over but offered to aid me in deciphering the Coptic notes. With his consent I then noted down the tenor of the following legend which is here given in my own words.

The manuscript proved to have been written by a monk who attended an important conclave of ecclesiastics as secretary to a bishop who was a delegate to an assembly hereinafter described. This monk was a French priest of the Roman Church who, after filling stations in Germany, Spain and Morocco, was with his bishop sent to Egypt where during six years they had resided and performed spiritual work among the Copts. This monk had profited by instructions given him by the Christian Copts who were celebrated

as recorders and secretaries. He had mastered several languages ; it is evident that the entire legend in French, Latin and Coptic was his work. With close attention at the conclave he recorded every incident of that interesting occasion, carefully registering the marvelous recitals of the aged man who entertained the ecclesiastics with the history of his life. The notes in Coptic were added immediately on their return to their stations at Koptos and Negada among the Copts.

## CHAPTER I

### THE COUNCIL AND ITS INCIDENTS

IN the sixteenth century again, there had arisen schisms, discontent in the Roman Catholic Church which the important Diet of Speyer could not arrange to the satisfaction of all interested in the welfare of their individual sections. Nor were all content with the action of that assembly having passed a decree against all ecclesiastical changes; in fact many divines, who had not attended the Diet at Speyer, considered themselves more conservative and sought a convention where they might assert their rights.

These parties at variance and their many differences of opinion led certain dignitaries in France, Germany and Venice to resolve to come together in general conference. Some had already opposed the League of Cambray under Pope Julius II. The Venitians particularly felt that they had been wronged. Those proposing

a conference sympathized with the Venitians and had never forgotten that Pope Julius and Louis XII of France had conspired with Maximilian in what was known as the League of Cambray, the object of which was to divide up Venice among them.

They remembered that the Papal power had not properly sought the interest of the Church, but selfishly had taken every worldly indulgence for their own gratification.

Bishops and Abbots grew to be powerful temporal princes and neglected spiritual duties.

In the month of May, 1529, ecclesiastics by every available conveyance, on saddle, by post and even afoot, impelled by the grievances of the Church, might be seen crossing the Pegnitz from the Lawrence side to the Sebald quarter in Nuremberg enroute to the Bishopric of the Romanesque Church, St. Sebaldus of the eleventh century. They were delegates to a conclave to be held at that city. The private assemblies were to be held in the Archbishop's palace.

After a preliminary meeting for organization

at the Bishopric, the Moderating Theologian requested the delegates to assemble in the Church of St. Sebaldus.

On the second day of the conference the clerical delegates assembled in the west choir of the Löffelholz chapel in the church already selected for the services.

After a short mass, the Moderating Theologian mounted a CHAISE or pulpit not in the chancel but conveniently near to all his hearers.

He spoke earnestly to them, explaining the differences which had brought them together, dwelling on the example of Christ and on many of the final scenes of his memorable life; he reminded them of the bearing of the cross, the Redeemer's falling under his burden on the way to Calvary, and finally the closing scenes of his life!

The Theologian said with impressive voice, "Let us realize these sacrifices made for us; let us lay hold on the truth and be strong in our faith striving to serve the Lord!"

After the Theologian had spoken in this strain for some time an aged man entered, who at first





CHURCH OF ST. SEBALDUS.



did not divert the attention of the audience from the discourse. Naturally his peculiar appearance soon attracted many eyes.

His flowing gray beard covering his shoulders and breast, descended below the girdle that bound his mantle at his waist to his emaciated form.

His patriarchal countenance seemed not to regard the assembly; his eyes were fixed on the speaker; he approached and leaned against a column near to the pulpit, where he gave marked attention to every word of the discourse; each time the name of Jesus was pronounced, his countenance was visibly so much moved that he swayed his head from side to side with emotion, and seemed to seek relief by placing his attenuated hand on his heart. At times he even struck his breast as with remorse; his every gesture and sad countenance expressed so much sorrow, that the Archbishop finding that he himself was not giving the attention he desired to the Theologian's sermon, beckoned to one of his attendants to come to him and directed him to observe attentively the "old man," and

instructed him that when the service should close and the stranger pass out, he should approach him and ask him courteously to wait a few moments until one in authority should speak with him. In case, said he, that the old man consents you will conduct him to the bishop's palace.

Undisturbed by the presence of the old man, the preacher continued his discourse; he called their attention to the closing years of the fifteenth century and these important days of religious progress of the sixteenth century. That progress was evidenced by Martin Luther boldly attacking the errors of the Church and of the times.

“We regret to acknowledge, that with reason he has taken exception to the profligate lives of the men to whom the Church and our oaths of submission compel us to regard as models; and remembering that we are the servants of Christ and that we owe obedience to Christ's representative on earth. If as Martin Luther has demonstrated, the vicegerents of Christ have really found their pleasures in the things of this

world and have set us ungodly examples, forgetting whom they represent, let us beware and follow directly the pure precepts of Emanuel.

Nor have we followed the divine example in doing unto others as we would be done by; we have condoned the persecution of the Jews; was not our Master an Israelite? let us see more justice dealt to that downtrodden race.

There is Columbia discovered! Mexico, the islands of the Western Indies, and Peru. We must send the message of our Redeemer to these lands and plant our Church there! Who shall take this work in hand? Who shall replace our protectors the Medicis? All these questions are for your consideration.

I hesitate, and yet I venture to say to you, that I am not astonished that Martin Luther protests; I believe him to be a true Christian; but remember united we must stand! We must be prepared to resist his opposition!

Not only Martin Luther, there are other great opponents—powerful and dangerous. Ulrich Zwingli recently preaching and arousing the faithful in Zürich and Berne. Likewise there is

Guillaume Farel, stirring up with great success the faithful in and about Geneva.

We meet in this conclave to prepare all our measures, that we may be able to retain our sheep undiminished in numbers in the fold of the Church of Saint Peter. Thus may we contend with the great wave of opposition which now threatens the Church of Rome on every hand!"

## CHAPTER II

### THE OLD MAN IS INVITED TO THE BISHOPRIC

THE Moderator in closing said, "The remarks I have made are appropriate to the occasion of to-day's service in our Church, which you know is the festival of the Three Kings."

Evidently the old man had paid close attention all this time, for when he saw that the Theologian was closing his discourse, and before the prelates had risen from their stalls, he moved quietly with dignity away from the audience. Passing through the side nave of the Church, approaching the public square without, he went at a quickened pace, as though he had loitered too long when on an important errand. It seemed as though he would now regain the time he had stopped in this sacred place; he proceeded not as one who feared the gaze of man, but as though he would be on his way. Yet he regarded with interest the architecture of the

edifice he was leaving. Young people and idlers were awaiting the exit of the Assemblymen. At first they neither stared at nor annoyed the strange old man, but soon after he passed from the portal of the church, and stopped to look at its ornamentation, all eyes were turned on him, and quickly he was so surrounded that the Bishop's secretary, with difficulty, overtook him; he, however, made his way through the throng, and touching the old man's arm said, "Pardon, sire, my master, a holy man, bids you come to the Bishopric to partake of some refreshment, and prays that you will grant him an interview." The old man placed his hand on the attendant's arm and replied, "Say to your master I will come; in fact I shall go with you with pleasure, and we shall see what your holy man desires of me."

Slowly they took their way through the town, and arriving at the Bishopric the old man was conducted into a room where many prelates were already assembled. The Bishop saluted him respectfully, saying, "My friend, of what country are you?"



"Sire," replied the old man, "that this is a difficult question to answer, you will readily see, when an opportunity is afforded me to answer your interrogation more fully."

The Bishop and all those who were present, seeing that there was something extraordinary about this man, were eager to hear whatever he might be willing to communicate.

The Moderating Theologian, divining that the old man had some secret on his heart, which he would be loath to reveal, addressed him with these words of encouragement, "Fear not, my old friend, I and all this company here assembled are disposed to afford you pleasure, and if possible comfort you; we therefore desire to hear whatever you may have to say."

After some moments of hesitation, with a deep sigh, the old man replied, "I have accepted your invitation to come before you to-day; sad experience has taught me not to decline the friendly offers of human beings. I find myself overcome with emotion. I cannot understand why I entered that chapel to-day. Certainly it was not of my own volition. Throughout my

life an unseen power has compelled me to go here and there; often after reflection I recognize an all-directing hand. The discourse of your Theologian has powerfully impressed me; I have been moved by your prelate's just allusion to the treatment of my suffering people. He has also several times during his remarks referred to one whose souvenir is ever in my mind, the Divine Man whom I neglected.

"You have perhaps noted my attitude as I have looked around on the decorations of your place of worship; that life-sized figure in stone of Christ being crowned with thorns; so lifelike that he seemed to be conscious of my presence; the bas-reliefs and on the chancel wall that picture of the Last Judgment, reminding me of the day when eventually I shall be heard, and perhaps condemned.

Pictures, statues, decorated windows, their subjects Christ—everywhere Christ. The view of all of which has been as poignards in my soul. Tears were brought to my eyes, as I looked upon that window in St. Sebaldus, where, in rich colors, Christ is depicted bearing the Cross."

The pathos of that old man's voice reached every soul, and made men's hearts to thrill throughout that ecclesiastical assembly.

The old man stood there a picture, his aged eyes looked out from their deep recesses with tender melancholy ; his was the countenance of one whom trials and world-wide experience had rendered sad, yet who turned with sweetness and gentleness upon those who thus met him with friendliness and courtesy.

He resumed, "I entered that church of St. Sebaldus rather out of curiosity, which, however, may perhaps afford me an opportunity of conversing with sympathetic men.

"It is human sympathy my heart doth crave. Though destiny, during long periods, hath denied me the consolation of kind words, during ages I have existed on the hospitality of men of all nations. I have never asked for food, the world has always afforded me what has sustained my life. Your excellency has asked me, what is my country? I am the son of a mechanic, a carpenter of Jerusalem ; I learned and practiced the trade of a shoemaker in the

ancient city, but through an incident, during more than fourteen hundred years I have been impelled to wander everywhere throughout the world, and behold I am still walking, without seeing any prospect of an end to my sufferings. On many occasions I have encountered great perils, but never have met death.

Alas, the deep regret of my interminable life attends me in all my wanderings. I execrate myself for having once refused the request of one who, I now am convinced, suffered for all mankind."

The Theologian, hearing this, arose and with renewed interest requested the aged wanderer to tell them more of his remarkable career.

The old man replied with emotion, "When it will be the pleasure of your reverences, I will relate the history of my life."

The Bishop in a short address thanked the old man for his entertainment, and invited him to take a place at table near to him.

The repast finished, the delegates were again desirous of hearing the stranger's narrative.

He also being refreshed began :

## CHAPTER III

### THE LEGEND OF A WANDERER

"I AM born of the tribe of Naphtali, my name is Ahasuerus. When our King Herod commanded the death of his two sons, Alexander and Aristobule during the reign of the Emperor Augustus, my father followed the trade of a carpenter, my mother worked on the garments of the Levites, which she knew how to embroider to perfection.

My parents had me educated to read and write in Hebrew and Parthian. When I was more advanced in years they gave me to read the Books of the Law, and those of the Prophets. Besides these books my father had a large old manuscript bound in parchment, which he had inherited from his ancestors; there I found many interesting facts which concerned my ancestry and the history of our people.

As you all know, our first ancestors, having

sinned, were expelled from the terrestrial Paradise. After they had two sons Cain and Abel, they conceived the idea that one of those children would become the Messiah, and pardon all sins, and that thus they would be forgiven for their error in the Garden, and that their disobedience would be forgotten. Their hope however soon vanished, when Cain killed his brother Abel, for whose death Adam grieved during a hundred years.

At that time they having had several other children, sons and daughters, Adam seeing that the time of his death was approaching, called his young son Seth, and told him to go to the Garden of Eden, and speak to the Angel Gabriel, whom he would find on guard there, with a flaming sword, and demand of him permission that he (Adam) might once more enter into that charming abode, before he should die. Seth who did not know anything about his parents former residence there, repaired to the Garden, found the angel and delivered Adam's message.

Gabriel replied, 'Neither your father nor your descendants will ever enter into this earthly

paradise; but if you will live godly lives I promise you what is far better. Ye shall all find rest in the Celestial Paradise.'

Having thus spoken, Gabriel permitted Seth to behold from a distance, that charming place of beauty where his father and mother had lived, and where they had committed the sin of disobedience, for which they had been banished. When Seth had seen this charming abode he was surprised at it, he was overcome with such great sadness that he began to weep. His grief was very keen. Seth started away, but the Angel Gabriel called him back and said, 'Your father will probably soon die; take these three seeds of the fruit of the "forbidden tree," and when your father is no more, place these three seeds under his tongue, and bury them with his body.' Seth went away and he accomplished that which the angel had commanded him.

You must know that in the same spot where Adam was buried, some time afterwards there sprung up and grew three trees, which in time became higher and larger, until they bore their fruit, which was so beautiful to look at that one

could not desire a more agreeable sight. But this fruit had a bitter taste, like the gourds of the desert, and was full of sand. And that is why these trees have remained there, and no one has disturbed them.

When our ancestors were led slaves into Egypt, Moses entered into a dense forest where he spoke with God. It is in this forest that he procured his rod, with which he performed many miracles in the presence of Pharaoh.

He changed his rod into a serpent, he opened the Red Sea at Azirut, making a passage through for our children. He caused water to issue from a great rock to quench the thirst of my emigrating race, and performed many other miracles.

In these years the population of the East increased rapidly, and the members of the different families formed tribes. They soon became the nuclei of nations. When our fathers arrived in the promised land, they began to build cities and great castles to defend themselves against their enemies who already had arisen,—such was human nature!

You must know that the trees of which we



have before made mention were still in the same place ; they were on the hill on which the City of Jerusalem was built. These trees remained there outside of the city barriers until after the death of King Saul, when the Prophet, King David, caused them to be surrounded by walls. He also built near to them a residence for himself, that he might daily see their fruit, which he considered extremely beautiful, for he was heard to say, ' I can see nothing more charming.'

One day King David having gathered three of these beautiful apples, he cut open one after another. In the first, there was much sandy earth ; within the skin of the second, he found written cashbat ; in the third which he cut in two, he observed in the pulpy interior a faint cloudy representation of the Crucifixion of Christ, which had been predicted by Solomon.

After various wars between the kings of Israel and other countries the city of Jerusalem was finally completely destroyed.

The palace of David having been ruined several times was rebuilt, and the three trees now stood at some distance from the city. The

château remained until Antipater, father of King Herod, caused it to be razed to the ground in Anno Mundo, 3939.

Antipater sacrificed this palace to enlarge the terrace on which he intended to make the public execution of malefactors, and this was known as the place of a skull—Golgotha.

In the city of Jerusalem, near to the temple, there then was a fine view of the three trees from a high wall on which I often seated myself, and more than a thousand times have I played with my childhood companions in the shadow of those famous trees, some of the wood of which was used to construct the Cross on which later on Jesus Christ was crucified."

Ahasuerus having now spoken for more than an hour his recitation was adjourned for the morrow.

## CHAPTER IV

### HEROD DREADS THE NEW-BORN KING

THE following day after the business session, the old man resumed his narrative.

“Reverend sirs, your Theologian in his discourse yesterday, alluded to the ‘festival of the three kings’; that reminds me of my youth. I remember well when those three monarchs came through our country seeking a new-born King.

My parent hearing of it, looked after them, and recognized the father Joseph as a former companion and fellow-workman.

When it will be your pleasure, I will again speak of that incident when I refer to my visits to Syria.

Soon the news of the infant King spread, and there came rumors that the King Herod was causing to be searched throughout the land for

Jesus the new-born King. Having been unsuccessful, Herod became irritated, because three potentates who had promised to visit him, had neglected to present themselves. The king became so enraged that he then gave an order to strangle all newly-born male infants up to the age of three years, not even sparing his own son, hoping thus to entrap Jesus in the net which he was spreading out, and then by getting rid of him always to remain king.

At this moment Joseph, the father of Jesus, was inspired to fly into Egypt with the child and the mother. He departed in great grief, going without saying good-bye to any one. Elizabeth, Mary's cousin, also received instruction to go with John the Baptist. She had not much time to fly, for Herod's soldiers were stationed on every side, committing horrible carnage on the innocent little children. Elizabeth flew from her house, and reaching an abrupt hill, beyond the city, she passed into a deep fissure, which led into a cave, where she hid herself and her son. Zacharias also concealed himself in the Temple of Solomon. Shortly afterwards the soldiers

found him there, and demanded of him where were his wife and son; Zacharias replied, 'I know nothing of them'; he was cruelly massacred; his blood, which spurted on the altar of the temple, could never be effaced. At this time my mother had a son of two years in her arms, which she bathed with her tears. Three soldiers entered our poor tenement, tore the boy from her arms, stabbed it in my presence, threw it on the ground, and went unconcernedly on their way.

Some time after this horrible carnage King Herod was laid low with a terrible malady. Such a stench from his body pervaded the air, that one could with difficulty remain near him to serve him. Worms issued and gnawed him, which little by little brought him to the point of death. Besides this he had such a heat in his body, that it seemed to him his intestines were being consumed.

He was enraged with hunger, he tried every imaginable remedy; nothing could comfort him or assuage his thirst. Seeing at last that he was about to die, he called his Prime Minister to him

and gave him a secret order, that all the principal grandees of the kingdom should be put to death, so that there should be great mourning throughout Judea as soon as he should expire.

His orders were not executed, no attention was paid to his commands, for all the people throughout the kingdom experienced great joy at being delivered from such a monster.

When this unnatural king was dead, Elizabeth, with her son, came out of the cave and returned to her home.

On being informed of the death of her husband, she fell fainting on the ground. Her friends believed her dead, because during three days she remained insensible; everybody went to see her; I also with my father. At last while we were preparing to part with her, she returned to consciousness, and commenced to groan and lament the death of her husband, Zacharias.

Shortly after Joseph, Mary, and the child Jesus also returned, and resided in the little town of Nazareth. They almost daily came to Jerusalem, and several times I saw the child

Jesus with his mother in the Temple of Solomon."

The old man now took a short period of repose.

## CHAPTER V

### AHASUERUS' PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

WHEN Ahasuerus had recovered his breath, the assembly, always very attentive to his words, requested him, through the Theologian, to continue his discourse, that they might hear much more of the narrative that had proved so interesting to them.

“Your reverences, many incidents of events that I relate to you from my personal recollection, may differ from the accounts in your sacred books. Yet I feel that these facts may interest you, coming as they do from one who witnessed those perilous scenes.

St. John the Baptist was no sooner dead than Jesus Christ took his place, and began to preach. I myself heard him more than thirty times in villages about Jerusalem. He called to his companionship serious men, who became his followers and his disciples. In their presence he per-



formed many miracles. I saw him cure the blind; I was there when he raised Lazarus from the dead; I ate of the loaves of bread and the fishes, that were so miraculously provided for all that were assembled on that occasion. It was indeed a supernatural work, for I myself had about as much as a whole fish, and bread in proportion; think of it, we were about five thousand persons, and after we were fully satisfied, they still filled many baskets, which were carried away to be given to the poor.

From this time the priests of the law, seeing that Holy Man's influence on the people, resolved among themselves to seize Jesus; but they could not see in what manner they might succeed, for they feared the people, who were greatly carried away with Christ's gentleness and loveliness.

When the day of the palms arrived, and Christ made his entrance into Jerusalem, the people, to do honor to him, and express their affection, cut branches of palms and other trees, and even spread their garments on the streets through which he should pass, and they cried, 'Saluta-

tions,' 'Glory to the Son of David!' 'Blessed be he who comes in the name of the Lord!' The acclamations of the people embittered more and more the enemies of Jesus, and afterwards, much to the surprise of many, came Judas, one of his disciples, and sold his master for the value of thirty deniers.

Those in authority were so incensed, that they decided no longer to allow Jesus Christ to gain the favor of the people. His enemies, therefore, not listening to Pilate, took the power into their own hands and condemned Jesus.

At about the eleventh hour I heard a great noise in the street; I ran to the door to see what was the cause of it. I saw a great many people who said that they had taken Jesus from the Garden of Gethsemane, and that they would not leave him until they saw him condemned.

As soon as I heard that, I took my lantern and went with the throng to see what was going on, expecting that something extraordinary would take place, which in fact did occur.

When we arrived where they had found Jesus, he had only pronounced a few words, when we

were all thrown to the ground as by a thunder-bolt; a man standing near me was thrown over my lantern and it was broken in many pieces. They then seized Jesus, bound him and led him before the High Priest; there he was closely examined, again they found no proof against him.

I then returned to the house to take some rest. In the morning I no sooner was awake than one of the neighbors came to tell me that Judas Iscariot had hung himself. I went to the place where he was hanging: never shall I forget his distorted countenance. Of the genealogy and history of this bad man, I will relate you more, when I return to his country."

## CHAPTER VI

### THE FATAL ERROR OF AHASUERUS

“YOUR eminences, alas, the enemies of Christ succeeded in securing the condemnation of your Saviour.

\* \* \* \* \*

The time then approached when Jesus Christ should be crucified. It was evident that the city was in trouble; the people ran in the streets in every direction, and as there was not time to lose, workmen in the city were ordered to make a cross.

The sentence having been given that Jesus should be crucified, they cut sufficient wood from the three trees of which I have already spoken, those trees which grew from the seeds that had been placed under the tongue of Adam after his death.

When the Cross was finished his enemies were impatient to complete their evil work. The

Cross was placed on the shoulders of Jesus to be carried to the Mount of Calvary, which was the place where malefactors were brought to death. I was at my door and saw the people running. I heard them say they were going to crucify Jesus. Shocked though I was to hear this news, I could not restrain my curiosity, and for the peace of my family I dared not show any sympathy for the Messiah, of whose innocence I was convinced in my heart.

Yet I took my infant child in my arms to let him see the crowd. I saw Jesus coming towards me, staggering under the heavy weight of the Cross; he came tottering before my door, and looking tenderly and with suffering into my face, he signified that he wished to rest himself a little there. Taking this for a grand affront, I pronounced those bitter words to Jesus Christ, 'Go!—go on!—go! get away from my door, you will injure me should the people see that I befriend you!'

Knowing that I was observed by all around me, I spoke more cruelly to him than my heart prompted me to do. I said, 'I will not have a

rascal like you repose here !' then Jesus looked at me with a sad countenance, and reprov- ingly replied, ' I will go, and I shall find repose,—thou shalt walk and walk continually ; and thou shalt never cease thy wandering ; thou shalt walk as long as the earth remains, until the last day of judgment. Then shalt thou see me seated at the right hand of my father, to judge the twelve tribes, and the Jews who are about to crucify me.'

Immediately I was awe-stricken. I laid my child on the ground and involuntarily followed Christ. I soon saw a kind-hearted woman wipe the sweat from the face of Jesus with a linen cloth. A little further on, I saw Mary and other women who were weeping. Then came a workman, hurrying along with a hamper containing nails and a hammer. He approached Mary and shaking one of the nails in her face cried, ' Behold, woman, it is with these your son shall be nailed !'

I next went with the workman to the mountain. When we arrived there, he took the Cross, raised it up and placed it in the ground,

and while the attendants of the executioner stripped Jesus, this workman drove large nails into the Cross.

Yet the cruel people did not turn away their eyes from such a sad spectacle ; many laughed and even mocked. Mary took the cloth from her head and placed it around the loins of Jesus ; then he was crucified. The Cross was placed in the same spot where Adam had been buried. Yes, the Cross was placed just where the wood had been cut from the three trees of which I have spoken.

After Jesus had pronounced some words, he died. Then the air became stifling ; the sky obscured ; there arose a great tempest ; the dead came out of their tombs ; the rocks were rent asunder and the earth opened at the foot of the Cross. Longin came with a lance and pierced the side of Jesus, who was dead, yet blood issued from the wound, and that blood trickled down into the opening in which the Cross was placed ; that precious blood bathed the remains of Adam and Eve, who had been interred there, and who long since had been reduced to ashes.

Longin was a one-eyed man. When he pierced the side of Jesus Christ, some of the blood spattered on his hand; he was a heathen, and feeling that there was something in his blind eye, he rubbed it with his bloody hand, and almost immediately recovered his sight. He soon after repented, was converted to Christianity, baptized, and died a martyr."



## CHAPTER VII

### HOME AND FRIENDS FORSAKEN : AHASUERUS WANDERS

AHASUERUS now breathed painfully, his countenance betrayed great emotion; the Theologian offered him something to drink; while he took some repose, the assembled company discussed his narrative.

After further request from the Theologian, Ahasuerus recommenced.

“As soon as Jesus Christ was dead, I went up the hill of the Mount of Olives, to look down on the city of Jerusalem. I felt I must see that loved city once more. Involuntarily I was impelled to turn my back on home, relations, friends, and commence my wandering. I knew not where I was going. Across plains, through valleys, over mountains, at sea, wherever I have been until now—when I have spoken with you, I have not really known repose.” In making a

profound salutation to the assembly he said, "Your excellencies, I feel at times as if I were on ardent coals, even when I seat myself, my legs move involuntarily; sleep I take little; all these centuries I have followed the invisible power, which has always driven me on, ever on."

The Theologian after some appreciative remarks to Ahasuerus, thanking him for this portion of his extraordinary narrative, addressed the conclave; he advocated the importance of unceasing attention to the missions of the Church, saying, "Our Master, Christ, has commanded us to reach every land with the news of his propitiation. .

Shall we not closely examine this remarkable man and learn from him something about all the nations of the earth, that he has visited?"

After courteously explaining to Ahasuerus the reason for asking this information from him, the Theologian suggested that if the aged man would grant them an abstract account of many of his wanderings, taking an occasional intermission for rest, he might accomplish a great service for the assembled ecclesiastics.

After some conversation Ahasuerus continued, "With reluctance I think of my early history, much of which now is yours, still more do I hesitate in replying to your request to describe to you the wide world I have so thoroughly seen.

Though it has been my custom to avoid the public gaze, and seldom to respond to invitations like this, upon reflection I will without hesitation render you a further account of my remarkable life.

You will remember I turned my back on that cruel crucifixion, and my native city, as I started on my eventful career."

## CHAPTER VIII

### EGYPT

“I DESCENDED through my native Judea to Joppa ; there not finding an opportunity by ship, I took the old main road through Azotus, Ascalon and Gaza to the southeast, by Horeb, in sight of Mount Sinai in Arabia.

I then turned my course to the northwest, through Pelusium. Already regretting that I could not remain in my native land, I entered Egypt. Egypt, not under its own rule, but dominated by Roman imperial power.

Shortly after commencing my career in strange countries, the wonderful sights and the novelty of changing scenes for a while diverted my mind from the realization of the inexorable sentence under which I was wandering. I found the Egyptians to be a mixed race ; I learned that they had intermarried, often forcibly, with Assyrians, Ethiopians, Persians, Arabs, Ro-

mans, Greeks and others. Yet their children and descendants had, up to that time, preserved the original type of their race under the earlier dynasties.

It was even so with the animals, the peculiar appearance of those used by agriculturists in the fields; no matter of what origin, they appeared to be Egyptian.

The people throughout the land were strict observers of the forms of worship bequeathed to them by their ancestors, and in which their fathers had instructed them from infancy. Some, however, listened to the multitude coming from Judea with tidings of 'the new hope,' 'the new religion.' Many had been convinced and converted. More and more early followers of Christ found their way into Egypt, and thousands sought refuge among the converted Egyptians at Koptos, Negada and Akhmim on the Nile.

In fact, they soon formed a large proportion of the population of the land. Their costume attracted me, for until then I had only been accustomed to see my own people. They wore

gowns of dark material, their heads turbaned with light brown or gray and black kerchiefs.

I could not see much of their women, for their faces were veiled; indeed, the more earnestly they espoused the new religion, the more desirous they seemed to be to conceal their faces, which were always veiled when they walked abroad.

They were deeply interested in their new religion; they had in manuscript made many copies of parts of your holy scriptures and had built many churches. These Egyptian Christians, these Copts were for a while well treated by imperial Roman rulers; but like the inevitable persecution of my race, they also were overtaken; they even, as the children of Israel in this same land, had to endure subjugation and almost bondage.

I saw the work of Abu Tummim about the end of the tenth century, when he built Cairo, and it became the capital of Egypt. Two hundred years later ill-advised Frankish crusaders nearly destroyed that beautiful city.

If any wandering of my life could be agree-

able, one of my pleasantest visits to Egypt was in the year 270 A. D., when Zenobia had taken possession and graciously ruled for a short time that land of pyramids and temples; but Rome, that engulfed all other powers, drove Zenobia also out of Egypt.

There I saw the worship of Serapis in all its phases—owing to errors in tradition, two hundred years later men asked me if there really had existed a man known as Serapion. Yes, I have even spoken to him; I met him, the Anchorite Serapion, shortly after he had been converted by a Christian hermit; I deemed him to be sincerely a convert to your faith; from his consistent manner of life I judged him to be truly a Christian. And there was Thacis who accepted Christ as her redeemer; she was indeed a devoted Christian. Her life was given to the faith of plebeians; yes, in that age of mythology she listened and accepted the proffered mediation of Christ and courageously confessed her belief in the then despised King of the Jews, accepting Christ rather as the Son and emissary of God, who she believed had sent him to redeem the

world or those who would accept him. Alas, I was then not of those who wisely laid hold on his salvation.

Already the controlling thought in my mind was the consideration of religions. In Judea I had observed, with interest, the Gnostics, and when in Egypt I found them in greater force. In the first and during the second century I met with two classes of these religionists, who termed themselves Gnostics. The members of one of these sects were really Christians, and did not stray from the fold of Christ. Others were those who, after having professed belief in Christ, sought and found consolation in mysticisms and false systems; in the ranks of the latter were Jews, Greeks, Persians, and Buddhists of several Oriental schools; many of their doctrines originated in my country Judea.

Some of my Hebrew race also took refuge in Gnosticism, and full as many of your sect, instead of carrying souvenirs of Christ in their hearts, listened to the Gnostic priests of the Abraxas persuasion, and from them received engraved mystic tokens. It was frail human na-



túre delighted with the idea of a redeemer, whom some of them had seen and yet looking for something mysterious and tangible, such as those tokens given them by their priests which they bound on their arms or carried on their breasts. At one time followers of Gnosticism could easily be recognized by a mark burnt in on the inner side of the lobe of the right ear.

I saw their prominent men, their mentors, the Nicolaitans. I heard Simon Magus<sup>1</sup> speak; he once said,

‘Ego Sum Sermo Dei!’<sup>2</sup>

I knew Menander, Cerinthus, Carpocrates, Marcion, of Pontus and Cerdon, but Cerdon did not like the race of my ancestors.

I judged that the majority of Gnostics with whom I conversed were opposed to true and pure Christianity. Your Saviour would have said of them, ‘Those that are not with me are against me.’ Yet the sentiments and the opposition of these stragglers caused devout Christians to reflect, and after reflection, they generally were strengthened in their belief.

<sup>1</sup> Acts VIII. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Acts 8: 8.

There were among these wanderers from the fold such names as the Ophites ; they even believed that Judas Iscariot was right when he betrayed Christ, yet there were learned and good men among the Gnostics ; there was Basilides, one in whose countenance probity, sincerity and erudition could be discerned.

Several centuries ago I lost sight of those peculiar people. In the fourth century, Gnosticism was forbidden by Roman law.

When I entered Egypt, although Cleopatra was no more, she still lived in the hearts of the people ; her beauty, her power, her genius, were exalted by every tongue. I saw how great had been her rule, not only of Egypt and the Egyptians, but of Antony and of Cæsar.

Other nations almost invariably seemed to look up to some revered being in whom to place their trust and their hopes of welfare in a future life. I saw with wonder the Egyptians believing in an invisible spirit, go to their tombs trusting in their emblems of another life.

I was at times permitted to read the inscriptions on scarabei, and when I saw those fervent ad-

dresses to the soul, I realized that their sentiment was beautiful; I, too, admired their attachment to the symbolic scarabei. They went to the grave, as to a welcome waiting place, full of hope, believing that they should some day advance, and that eventually they should rejoin the hosts at the throne of the supreme ruler Osiris.

The ancient Epyptians were earnest in their devotions, and self-abnegating in their sacrifices. Their forms and ceremonies had no resemblance either to those of your faith or mine; Osiris was the nearest to an ideal redeemer, yet he was adored in fear as a relentless god, a severe judge, before whom all would have to stand some day.

As recently as the fifth century I saw men worshipping at altars raised to Osiris and Isis. After the Byzantine efforts to suppress these rights, tumults occurred among the easily excited populace, and I saw good government in Egypt decline.

Examining carefully the sculptured stones of this people and the wall painted representations of their revered deities, I was convinced that some of their reputed sovereigns were actually

only their mythological deities which, through generations, had been adored, until tradition gave them a place in history which really was apochryphal.

I was grieved by the evident fraud committed by Thotmes III who, when he came to the accession, erased the name of his sister Hatshepu, and substituted his own and his brother's name, reckoning his reign from Hatshepu's accession.

In Egypt my chief interest at one time was to look into the evidences of the power attained by the Israelites, and the good accomplished when our Joseph governed in the land of the Pharaohs.

Though I am and was a Jew, I always rejoiced to see the failure of every effort of Imperial Pagan Rome to destroy Christianity.

When Constantine in 313 A. D. announced and decreed that Christianity should have equal rights with other religions, and when his power became absolute, he held forth the banner of your Christ.

I confess to you that then I regretted that I had been born a Jew; it seemed to me that I

was spurned on account of my race. The more the Roman emperors endeavored to crush Christianity, the more I became convinced of its truth.

During all these struggles in my own mind and the dissensions I witnessed among believers and pagans, I admired, and to this day, rejoice in the acts of those converts; I still recollect the energy and the perseverance of those devout early Christians who, in Alexandria, brought together and preserved the writings of the evangelists; yes they gathered and guarded the manuscripts now forming your New Testament; the testament of the holy man for whom I had no pity.

#### ALEXANDRIA.

You would have had now many important records of ancient history in Greek, Hebrew and Latin, if the great collection of manuscripts of the earliest years had been spared from the pillage of the fourth century and that conflagration of the seventh century A. D.

One of your sect, Theophilus, a Christian

bishop in 389 A. D., at least permitted the removal of hundreds and even thousands of volumes from that library.

During one of my visits, in 634 A. D., Omar I succeeded Abou Bekr in power; as soon as Omar had the purse in hand he accorded pensions to the family of Mahomet.

Omar's chief general Amru-Ben-El-Ass made the conquest of Egypt for him and took possession of Alexandria in about 640 A. D. Among the treasures which fell into the hands of the Moslems was the great 'Library of Alexandria.' Amru, at the command of the Caliph Omar, directed his hordes to burn the library and thus were destroyed the precious manuscripts and other literary treasures never to be replaced. I stood there at the time and with grief viewed the conflagration; it burned during three days, the atmosphere was at times stifling and the heavens were darkened by the singed and parched fragments of their velum rising from the burning mass. Amru had proposed to Omar to spare and preserve that valuable depot, but Omar insisted that it must go, and ordered

it to be burnt, saying to him that the Koran should take the place of all other books.

It was at that time that the Mahometans became as one nation ; no matter where they had wandered, their coreligionists looked after their welfare. Those in Syria, Persia, Mesopotamia, Lybia and Africa, all paid tribute to Omar. Whilst Omar reigned he built more than a thousand mosques. These were among the most attractive architectural structures of all nations in that epoch. It was the wisdom of his administration which insured the duration of his conquests. His successors have always profited by the resources he laid up and provided for the faithful.

Nor can I turn from my remembrance of sojourns in Egypt without speaking of the peaceful era of rest under the Persian Chosroes ; but again in the seventh century there came the invasion and final conquest of the Arab Moslems which made Egypt the home of Islamism."

## CHAPTER IX

### EARLY CHRISTIANS

“FROM the moment I left my home in Jerusalem, I continually witnessed the struggle of those pagans who longed to quit the worship of effigies to make Christ the solace of their hearts. I saw them renounce their peculiar pagan rites, their useless sacrifices and their fealty to misguiding mentors.

From the moment of their conversion they realized that the offer of eternal life they had received from Christ was an inheritance from above, which could not be controlled by the decrees of this world.

As a pagan government would not tolerate the open expression of faith in Jesus of Nazareth, nor permit his people to worship him publicly, they were for a time driven to secret reunions, assemblies hidden in the catacombs on the Via Appia and elsewhere at Rome. I have



often seen them descending underground to pray, and I have seen them when passing their sentries show their tesserae. See here is one engraved on bone ; I have carried it more than twelve hundred years.

You may, perhaps, wonder why these simple-hearted people did not openly worship their redeemer. In the second century A. D., the Emperor Valerian forbade them to hold public meetings for their worship, therefore they were forced to resort to their subterranean chapels.

Fifteen years later, however, when I revisited Rome, there was toleration of their assemblies, but they were still persecuted in many ways.

In the coliseum, I saw many of those Christians expire in the arena rather than deny their faith."

## CHAPTER X

### MAHOMET

“MEN of the Church, dignitaries of your denomination, until now the prominent feature of my narrative has been your Master, Christ. To-day I would speak to you of a man, an Arab, who born, Anno Domini 569, was not laid in a manger, whose life dawned amidst all the comforts of his parents home in Mecca. That Arab, Mahomet, who though giving years of his youth to a commercial life, dreamed and investigated religions, and who eventually led millions to a holy life through the revelation which he professed to have received. I knew his father, and often saw Mahomet. When still a boy he traveled with his uncle, Zobier, accompanying his caravan, passing through vast solitudes of desert places, only at times resting at oases; attending Arabian fairs; again through

valleys and over mountainous regions, ere they could realize by the sale of their goods at Bostra.

An important element in the formation of the young Mahomet's character was his acquaintance with the holy Nestorians, when encamped with his Uncle Taleb. These monks knew and visited his uncle, the master of the caravan. The young Mahomet listened seriously to the conversations and instruction of those monks. The pleasure and the interest was mutual, for those Christian Nestorians were gratified with the eager attention paid by the youth to their discourses. They little dreamed that he whom they were counselling, should, when a man, lead millions from idolatry to a religion that would almost govern the Eastern world. I admired the boy, for I saw that he accomplished carefully everything that he undertook.

During his caravan life, he encountered idolaters in Arabia, and even in his native village; he saw how images were being brought there in great numbers from other countries. He compared these pagan ideas with what he had

learned of the book of God, from his wife's cousin, Waraka, who had translated and explained portions of it to him, by lamplight of an evening.

By degrees in his early life his mind was turned from the idolatry of his people. The influence of the instruction of those Christian men was afterwards visible in the principles he sought to inculcate after he came into the influential position of Prophet. I was even present at Mecca when Mahomet was betrothed, and married to Cadijah. I saw the poor rejoice on that occasion in his gifts of dates and the flesh of sheep and camels.

After several years of labor he turned from commercial enterprise in caravan life, to the serious consideration of religion. What a revolution he accomplished! He converted not only the citizens of his Mecca, but in a short time, the Arabs of the entire Orient. He taught them to turn from their hundreds of deities in wood and stone, and place their belief in one God, and the blessed and accepted Mahomet as their Prophet. He reflected, he considered well, the

revelations which he conscientiously professed to have received.

He believed in his mission, yet he hesitated until in his fortieth year; then he made known his important communications to mankind. Mahomet's sincerity and honesty were undoubted.

It is a remarkable fact that he did not with egotism rush before the public, or even make known his doctrines indiscriminately to those with whom he had associated in childhood. Some of those to whom his advanced opinions had been made known, looked upon him as one demented. After a long struggle with himself, it seemed actually as if he was instructed by an invisible power, to announce to the world his message of love, and then withal it was done with so much humility.

When he looked into the faces of men to advise and instruct them in the way they should go, his countenance was lighted with a smile. He also had a tender, sympathetic voice that appealed to men; those even who heard him and wavered, could not long resist that voice, as it brought those merciful arguments to their hearts.

I saw men in the desert where Mahomet and his followers were encamped. How eagerly they listened to his comforting words ! I recognized him as another great Messiah ; I know that his followers accepted him as such. It was evident that he induced them to live better lives ; no reasonable man could doubt that Mahomet was a blessing to the people to whom he declared himself and his religion.

Mahomet hoped by marriage to insure a succession of male children, who, in time, would continue to inculcate his religious principles, and who would be looked up to and respected as his descendants, in this he was disappointed.

His example was one of moderation in all things ; he was abstemious and wore very simple costume. It was he who instituted the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, long before his own tomb and remains were the objects of sacred veneration on the west of the Red Sea.

To-day, eight hundred years later, in this sixteenth century, Anno Domini, his religion and his banner are known over the civilized world.

Your eminences, with all respect to your

denomination, I wish to say to you, that the religion of Mahomet appealed directly to the souls of men, without the aid of such effigies, forms of worship, and reminders, as you employ in your Church. His followers are instructed to face Mecca, from whatever point they may find themselves, and there they plead with the Almighty to grant their prayer through the mediation of Mahomet."

## CHAPTER XI

### AFRICA

WHILE Ahasuerus rested for a moment the Moderating Theologian said, "These remarks are certainly interesting and important. We cannot all think alike, but recognizing the liberality of thought expressed by our aged friend, we await with impatience his continued recital."

Ahasuerus, without fatigue, quickly recommenced his discourse, saying, "Naturally, while on a continent, I continued gradually my way through the adjacent countries, and in this course I strode through the land of the descendants of Ham.

Traversing the African sands, where the torrid rays of the sun beat upon my aged brow, I often hoped that its tropical power might send me to that sepulchral home where one doth rest; such was not to be my lot; it could not be so for



me! Just as in youth, I enjoyed the sun's brilliant light, so then its burning rays seemed to renew my life. True, its brightness at moments dimmed my vision; ever in my ears I heard that voice that bade me 'hasten on.' I could not resist, always continuing my march through that land—then the home of serfdom.

In most countries bondage was the fate of men taken as prisoners in times of war. In some civilized nations men had been condemned to forced labor, becoming bondsmen on being convicted of crime, thus they were judicially sentenced to servitude. In Africa alas, the inhabitants of villages everywhere were liable to seizure at any moment; often have I seen families in great sorrow, some member having been recently kidnapped.

When at a village then known as Malhado in Ginnie,<sup>1</sup> I saw a father who, to propitiate the gods, publicly tore his daughter's body apart, and threw the pieces of flesh into the fields, that the birds of prey might be fed, and the vengeance

<sup>1</sup> The author assumes no responsibility for the names of places given in Coptic four centuries ago.

of the gods of the forest might be appeased. I wondered at such horrid ceremonies, and at such a brutal sacrifice, but on inquiry learned the old story; these people perform all their religious rites at the direction of their Marabouts, their mentors.

I went into Lybia,<sup>1</sup> and there I met with a strange order of nature, a community of people ruled entirely by women. There, contrary to the rules of other countries, the women were mistresses, setting the men aside; they taught themselves all sorts of athletic exercises, and prepared their bows and arrows, not only for the hunt of birds and animals, but for military combat. They went out into the country seeking for their enemies, whilst their husbands remained in their huts, to attend to the house-keeping, and take care of the children, the larger proportion of whom were girls, for in each family the life of only one boy was spared.

This state of affairs was the result of a law made by the women, which thus insured a continuance of their supremacy.

Everywhere in this country I encountered

cannibals; still there seemed to be no hope of my giving up life; the cannibals had no appetite for my aged body; in their estimation my flesh was undesirable.

I marched a hundred leagues through the Desert of Sahara, before I found a drop of sweet water with which to wash the dust from my head and eyes.

As I proceeded to the south and interior of Africa, among tribes by great lakes, I found more astonishing systems of adoration and of trust, in the most grotesque and hideous figures rudely carved in wood. Some of the tribes had erected colossal gods or talismans at the entrances to their villages; they also were rudely carved in hard wood and were colored in a most primitive manner. In their hamlets a place or square for reunion was set apart for worship, where an altar of stones was erected, on which animals, and even human beings were frequently sacrificed. This space was also the site of enormous, grotesque deities in wood, of the most extravagant and hideous designs.

O reverend prelates! what opportunities I

have had to compare the religions of this world! I am convinced that he is narrow indeed, who only knows the religion taught to him by his parents. At the same time I believe that the religion of Christ shows to greater advantage by comparison with the various religions of all the ages, from the foundation of the world.

Moving through the desert to the northeast, I stopped at beautiful Ouedna, which the Romans had subjugated. They were still in the thralls of paganism when I stopped with them. They used much water in their religious rites, and there I saw a wonderful arched cistern of great dimensions, which they had built in the third century A. D.

I crossed to the west to Thimgad, a city constructed of stone, which the builder secured with difficulty, from the rocky barriers of El Kantara; the white marble of the latrines and baths transported from Italy was in contrast to the impurity of their religious life.

Thence in the northeast I saw Carthage in its grandeur; I admired the perfect system of storage and supply of rain and spring water, I re-

garded with wonder its temples to unknown gods. That city was too beautiful to escape the envious eyes of the Romans. Besides its frequent contests with the Greeks from Sicily, Carthage, after the second century, became too great for its own welfare, it was its very magnificence that attracted the greedy, grasping hand of Rome.

Rome could not bear to see Carthage controlling those African cities, and colonies such as the islands of Corsica and Sardinia. So I lived to see the pride of Carthage fall, and all-absorbing Rome to enthrone its vast power where the Phœnicians had prepared and established so great a stronghold."

## CHAPTER XII

### PHŒNICIA

“FROM Carthage, the greatest of the colonial enterprises of the Phœnicians on the Mediterranean, I determined to see again their original parent country on the western coast of Syria.

On the occasion of different visits during three centuries to the land previously occupied by the master merchants of the then known world, I saw evidences among the Phœnicians when in their own country of foreign influences in the construction of their villages and towns.

Also the art objects were of types, naturally the result of their commercial relations with other countries to the south and west, particularly with Egypt—that country lying nearer to them than the islands on the Mediterranean Sea where they colonized. The Phœnicians were continually changing their habitations. They were always a migratory, seafaring people, speak-

ing a modified dialect of the Hebrew, sufficiently akin to the language of my childhood to render it possible for us to converse and understand one another.

I have no definite conception of their religion, but can remember that they revered nature. Mountain-tops were adored because they rose heavenward, which all men seem to have conceived to be in the skies—above.

All meteoric stones falling from the heavens were sacred to them; they esteemed these bolts from heaven as messengers from thence, which man, in his frailty and ignorance, could not comprehend; therefore from these they carved and engraved their spherical token seals.

I visited and admired their temples with peculiarly ornamented stones, particularly the temple of Melkart on the southeast shore of Melita, now known as Malta; there they left inscriptions in two languages, in Greek and Punic. The adjacent island of Gandus was rich in pitted stone remains of Phœnician temples which they were compelled to forsake when driven out by the Greeks.

From what I was enabled to learn their forms of worship were simple and impressive. The orbs of day and night, rivers, trees and green fields were devoutly worshiped by them; their adoration of the sun was in the sense that it should be regarded as the Son of the God who rules in the heavens, through which his brilliant Son passes.

This was the religion which they first established on the African continent when they founded Carthage; their priests naturally attended to the propagation of their religion, but Mahometanism became the faith of all the people of Syrian descent in the eighth century.

At this day, in the sixteenth century, we only find buried in the débris of ages symbols engraved on scarabei and other token stones, evidences and souvenirs of their peculiar belief.

Your Catholic reverences have a religion so firmly founded that I believe no convulsion of nature can ever cause it to totter. You are saints of the Lord God—your religion shall endure; to us is only given indications of the existence and religion of that remarkable people, the Phœnicians."



## CHAPTER XIII

### GREECE

“IN my young manhood, when I commenced my unwilling walks, I found that ancient Greece had become a Roman province under the name of Achæa. The Romans intended that the Greeks should not regain their freedom, and sought to render them powerless by dispossessing them of the means of defending themselves. There were always classes in Athens who gained and accumulated wealth, and lived luxuriously in proportion to their fortunes ; this, as in all such cases, raised the value of the necessities of existence, so that the poorer classes, and especially the skilled artists, were compelled to turn their thoughts to Asia and the West.

At the time I was first in Greece the artisans were looking towards Rome as a good field for art labor, and had already commenced to colonize there. They did not need to carry their

gods with them, for Rome had largely borrowed from their mythology, so that in matters of religion they found themselves at home in Italy.

Hadrian and Caracalla sympathized with the Greek colonists, and did much to improve their condition; however, they and their immediate successors continued to regard Greece more with a view to Roman aggrandizement. Rome did not even afford Greece the means of defense, but deprived them of the arms with which to protect that country from the Sicilian pirates.

During the third and fourth centuries, Greece was a prey to barbarian invasions. In that time I did not go there. Eventually I saw that true courage and good defensive stone walls helped materially to increase their prosperity.

In the fifth century I visited the splendid ancient buildings of the Acropolis.

The religion of that Hellenic people was a blending of Christianity and paganism; it seemed to enable the people to live peacefully and at ease. In the eighth century I found the whole Grecian national structure falling to pieces by the invasion and power of the Saracens.

Just then rose that great man Leo, the Isaurian, who revived the whole nation. I saw the pestilence which in so short a time ravaged the cities and that laid thousands in hastily made tombs. Yet that scourge overlooked me, the Jew wanderer. Ah, how willingly would I have exchanged my sort with those victims—but the inexorable sentence had to be executed. They, the men of Athens, went to rest in their silent graves and I, the reprobate Jew, was spared to wander! Your reverences, I have not spoken to you of their literature, nor of their lettered men, but I will mention that I knew the poet-monk, Ptochoprodromus, and the emperor, Manuel Comninus, in the twelfth century."

## CHAPTER XIV

### CRETE—MINOS

“ AFTER leaving Phœnicia, I visited among the wonders of the earth the partially buried ruins of a city in the island of Crete which had been deserted by its tenants two thousand years before Christ.

I was still able to form some idea of the grandeur of the palace of Minos. Its chambers, corridors, vaults, basso rilievos and pictured walls told of an earlier and surprising civilization.

A throne was still there, with chairs of state all in stone; on either side arched niches contained archaic decorations in color.

I now recall inscribed stone pilasters and panels, a space on which were carved two lions in relief, reminding one of Mycenæ. Above remained a portion of a frescoed wall, on which a great Mycenæan griffon with the plumed head

of a cock continued to that day to look down on those who dared to break the silence that sealed those mysterious premises. Had I not known that it had held that position during ages anterior to my existence, I would have thought that the effigy had recognized in me, the wandering Jew, and that it was spurning me with its hawk-like eye!

I stood—mused—and remembered that this had actually been the palace of Minos, King of Cnossus of Crete, mythologically son of Zeus. There men had struggled and vied with one another to establish the religion of their preference. For into that palace passed daily men of many races, Cydonians, Pelasgians, Achæans and Dorians. These various people were not united in their interests, therefore they fell, and with the nation crumbled the great edifices which had once domiciled great Minos!"

## CHAPTER XV

### ITALY

“PROBABLY no country was ever settled by a greater variety of conquerors from many nations ; there were in turn Greek, Gothic and Lombard rulers, then came the Romans under Justinian ; then the Gregories, the Leos—the release from the allegiance to Byzantium—Charles the Great (Charlemagne) in the eighth century.

For a while your popes sat tranquilly in the chair which you consider holy. In the tenth century came the German rule under ‘Otto the Great’ when at times the Italian people were not allowed to elect their pope. Otto willed that your papal rulers should be chosen from more holy men and from a more northern race.

Had the well-known principle, ‘United we stand’ been fully appreciated by all the partisans of the many sections in that beautiful peninsula, union might have prospered and strengthened

the people of Ravenna, lords of Ferrara, the Scallas of Verona; the Forrioni in the central northwest; those seeking power at Piacenza Manfredi and Faenza; in fact the history of Italy as I saw it during those centuries was the contention of various dynastic houses to rule and to augment their power.

Italy has not had sufficient political unity nor organized national existence. Now; with Dante, we are hoping that we have entered into a new era of our existence; I say our hope, for although I am a wandering cosmopolitan, after Jerusalem I feel most at home in Rome, though my people have been relegated to almost banishment. Are we not men, have we not contributed to the wealth of sovereigns and of the entire world by our close attention to finance?

Let it be said that we Israelites are an accursed race, yet have we not been a valuable element in the commercial interests of all modern nations from the fifth to this the dawning of the sixteenth century?

I have seen periods in Italy when the rights of citizenship were accorded to all men; when

the skilled workmen of other countries gave their aid to art in Italy, no one asked are you Roman, Latin, Italian, Greek or provincial; all men entitled to the honor announced and claimed their Roman citizenship."

The Moderator here interposed—"My aged friend, you must have seen many administrations?"

"Yes, your reverence, I have seen great changes; well do I remember when in the various nations along the entire length and breadth of the Mediterranean, man looked for defense—protection from the great parent empire of Rome. The adoration of regal power—of imperial sceptres often seemed more profound than their respect for the mythical divinities which were held up before them.

In the first and second century A. D. the empire of Rome included about all civilized countries; although their emperors were often autocrats and severe, the powerful influences of the law and the assurance of justice united that great national combination.

But after Marcus Antonius, I beheld con-



tinued, even rapid decline and then a fall which affected the entire eastern world.

I have said to your reverences, the eastern world; for it is only within the last thirty-five years that we know of a western hemisphere.

Honored prelates, I desire now while speaking of Italy to mention the Israelites who formed so large a proportion of the subjects of that kingdom.

- It seems that all my race have wandered; for whatever land I traverse, Jews are to be seen and rarely an instance of indolence.

No doubt, some of them have traveled as I have been forced to do. Some of them have been wanderers. I can sympathize with them. I, the wanderer through ages, paying the penalty of that unfortunate error.

You well know how cruel has been the treatment of my race; we have been forced to live within inclosures; you are aware that we have been depressed, broken down; we say in our Hebrew language, 'Our people have been abandoned.'

The first Jewish prisoners were made slaves

by the great Pompeius after he had taken Jerusalem in the year 63 A. D. At one time the more wealthy Israelites lived in the great capital honored and respected ; in fact did not Titus desire to make Veronica empress of Rome !

Under several emperors down even to the reign of Tiberius they were esteemed and well treated.

Again, think how my Jewish ancestors in Italy were forced to assist in building the coliseum where the earliest members of your Church suffered in contests with wild beasts and lay down their lives. It is true that those Jews who had amassed a fortune were allowed freedom in proportion to the taxes they paid.

With credit to the holy fathers of your Church, when the papal power was well founded, Israelites fared better and were allowed for a while more freedom.

Then again came reverses for Jews—and now in this sixteenth century all classes in Italy are ill at ease.

Italy has become the battle-field on which the quarrels ecclesiastical and political of Europe are

being fought ; French invasions of both northern and southern Italy, have occurred under Charles VIII, and Louis XII.

Mr. Moderator, I cannot cease speaking of Italy without some mention of that part of the country which was the domain of the Etrurians.

You have desired to hear and to acquaint yourselves through my experience with the countries which I have traversed. Alas, the Etrurians, whose nation formed a part of that peninsula, had already long gone to rest, and their cities to decay and ruin, before I began my adventurous life. There had existed twelve principal cities, the remains of which I visited while they still enabled one to judge of what they had been in their palmy days. Among other cities which the Etruscans had colonized were Herculaneum, Pompeii, Surrentum and Capua ;—these cities I saw in their magnificence. Pompeii and Herculaneum were overwhelmed soon after I passed there ; one by cinders and ashes, the other with molten lava.

I saw several of their temples, square in form, but as their religious services had ceased and the

priests who had so often officiated were silent in the tombs, I cannot contribute that knowledge to your reverences.

One hundred and twenty years before my doom was sealed, that fatal day, when I repulsed Christ at Jerusalem, the Etruscans were admitted to Roman franchise, and Rome was a prosperous Etruscan city ruled by Etruscan kings.

Your reverences, centuries ago I visited their tombs which were then in a greater condition of preservation, the curious invaders of these times not having yet despoiled them. I saw every evidence in the symbols that were deposited with their beloved dead, that they believed in a future and better existence. And like you of your Church, were looking forward to rejoin them at the Throne of the divine Creator of the Universe."

## CHAPTER XVI

### BYZANTINE

“PRELATES of the Church, it must be the same divine Power on which you have founded your trust, that has enabled me with little fatigue to relate during so continuous a period, the narrative of my eventful career.

As I have witnessed the rule of nearly all the sovereigns of the Roman Empire, my opinion of their comparative worth may be valued by your august clerical body.

Constantine, in my judgment, was one of the most eminent of all the Roman Emperors. I was in Byzantion while Constantine was in power. Through the existence of that Roman city on the Bosphorus, and the temporary fall of the once Imperial government at the city on the Tiber, the power of the Popes increased, and had they been less immoral, and more united and devoted to the interests of the Church, they

might have continually retained the influential position they had gained; but the corrupt lives of some of them caused holier and greater men to seize the government, and accord royal protection to the people.

Often in Italy the power was military; emperors or kings were placed, or removed from their thrones by armies, so that at times several armies, in different districts, placed their nominees or favorites on as many temporary thrones. This caused many and prolonged struggles, as each potentate sought to make his throne the centre and commanding power of the nation.

Though through the circumstances of my birth and education, I am a Jew, I admired Constantine's protection of the Christians. When early in the fourth century he became fully possessed of the empire and power, he bravely professed and lived up to the doctrines of Christianity. He built and improved his capital east of the Dardanelles, modestly wishing at first to have it known as Nova Roma. The greatest men are often humbled, and it was this

element in Constantine's grand character, which prompted him not to give his own name to the city of his making.

But on the insistence of his people, they named that city, which we all now recognize as Constantinople.

It was there I saw the triumph of your religion, and at the same time, the unsuccessful attempts in Rome, Egypt, and Northern Africa, to suppress Christianity and restore paganism. I was gratified, though a Jew, at the failure of all those conspiracies. Experience had convinced me what was best for humanity.

Then in Byzantion it was said, 'Satan hath lost his power over man.' Then occurred the first millennium in the Orient. It was an era of Christian peace, yet it did not endure the thousand years the term implied.

While it continued, the banner of your religion floated peacefully on the borders of the Black Sea, and triumphantly wherever people existed under the protection of Constantine. He not only reigned long and clemently, but he thought wisely to provide for the future interests of his

people when he divided his dominion among his own children, giving the power to his sons.

But alas in the close of the eighth century, the Emperor Constantine VI, grandson of Constantine Koprônymos, was cruelly deprived of his eyes by his mother Eirênê. In the commencement of the ninth century, through intrigue, the patrician, Charles Augustus, was crowned, and his throne established at Rome by Pope Leo, so that as with the popes of one hundred years ago (in the fifteenth century), there existed two Roman emperors, and nominally two capitals of Rome. I visited them both, and with continued disappointment, I realized that at neither court could I obtain my heart's longing desire to forget life in the oblivion of the tomb."

At this moment an aged priest rose, and addressing the Moderating Theologian, stated that he had fulfilled a mission during several years in Turkey, the former seat of Byzantion. He desired that Ahasuerus might say something of the ancient Armenians.

After a few minutes reflection the old man



complied, saying, " Ancient Armenia was known as Hayasdani, the land of the Armenians. It occupied a considerable territory in Persia, Russia, and Turkey, part of it lay east of the Euphrates, and the minor country to the west of that river in Asia.

I passed through their country in the second century when Mithridates did much by good government for the prosperity of his and their dominions.

Thaddeus and Bartholomew had already founded an Armenian Christian Church while I was yet young. Their doctrines resembled greatly those of the original Greek Church. It differed from your Roman Catholic creed in that the Armenians do not believe in your intermediary state ; for them there is no purgatory.

The office of priest with them descended from father to son ; it was entirely hereditary, and even when a son would have preferred the life and occupation of a commercial man, he was compelled on the demise of his father, to devote his life and services to the priesthood.

When I was in Etchmiadzin in the third

century, one of their patriarchs called me to him; observing my age and peculiar appearance, his curiosity prompted him to question me. I answered him freely; he treated me with great courtesy. His own language was Persian and Turkish, but being a man of much education, he spoke Arab with me, so that we fully understood one another.

The Patriarch knowing that I had visited all countries where your Roman faith was established, improved the opportunity of my presence, to inform himself of the comparative strength of the various branches of the Christian church of those days. Some centuries later, in the year 410, A. D., Miesrob with the aid of Ecelencis and Palnensis prepared another version of the Armenian Bible. I must call your eminences attention to the fact that like the different translations of the books of the Buddhists so each branch of the Christian Church prepared editions of the Holy Bible to suit their own peculiar ideas or faith."

The Theologian now arose and addressing both the assembly and the old man, said, " These

narrations are indeed of intense interest, and we await what is in store for us to-morrow. I pray you, Ahasuerus, to accept the resting-place which my secretary has prepared for you, until we meet again."

## CHAPTER XVII

### CRUSADERS

REFRESHED and with wonderful vigor, the aged wanderer resumed his position and recital. "I to-day shall speak to you of the results of the Mussulmans mission in the East. As soon as the followers of Mahomet realized their growing power throughout the Orient, they conceived the idea that they should conquer the whole known world, force every nation to think of Mahomet as they did, and accept and adopt their religion. These were the hordes with whom the men of the banner of the Cross had to contend. Among these were the Saracens; those who resisted and combated them were the Crusaders.

There is no doubt that Mahomet was a great reformer, whose doctrines were adapted to the Nomadic race, to whom he first communicated the divine revelations he professed to have re-

ceived. He did drive out idolatry and paganism, and benefit mankind to a certain degree, but the propaganda of his followers was becoming too powerful. Those who undertook the Crusades endeavored to ensure such a limit to the power of Mahomet's followers, as would protect Christians.

In all this time there was a universal Crusade against my race, notwithstanding the richer Jews always commanded respect. Being an Israelite, not of the persuasion of either of the religious parties concerned in those Crusades, I could fraternize equally with both sides. I must say that I found the Mahometans consistent defenders of their faith.

During my career, there have occurred, again and again, struggles of a religious nature, which may interest your reverences. They were repetitions of those nominally holy wars or Crusades against those Mahometans.

Religious men of your Church in the close of the eleventh century, principally under the guidance and orders of Pope Urban II, carried on such expeditions.

L. of C.

Peter, the Hermit, strongly advocated the wars against those whom he considered infidels ; he suggested that the forces of the Christian Church should go forth under the holy flag, and in token of their errand should bear the ensign of the Cross on their shoulders.

These expeditions continued from time to time during many years, until there had been eight principal Crusades. At first the ranks were not filled from all Europe, nor was the cause popular, but by degrees all Christians appreciated the importance of securing possession of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, which had so long fallen into the hands of the Mussulmans.

One hundred and fifty years later a holy man of your Church, Saint Bernard, started another Crusade ; both French and Romans accompanied this army. Although they were earnest and courageous, I do not think that much success attended their efforts.

In 1187, Saladin, a most important power in the Mohammedan faith, drove out again the Christians, and for the time frustrated all the efforts of the Crusaders to defend the Christian

possession of the holy place at Jerusalem. Then all Christian Europe became interested, and there followed a number of ineffectual efforts to regain the prize. Alas, this has not been fully accomplished in this sixteenth century, A. D.

In the thirteenth century Frederick II was crowned Christian King, and resided at the Holy City. He and the Christians remained in power until 1244, when once more, and finally, the Mahometans took possession. Again the Crusaders commenced, but with the result that by degrees the Christians lost all foothold in the Holy Land.

Originally your church was united in the cause of the Crusaders, but even in your holy ranks differences of opinion and jealousies interfered with the successful prosecution of the cause. Crusades were even formed against some who professed Christ, yet whom Pope Innocent looked upon as heretics. Later on there were crusades against those in Scandinavia who were still adherents of Paganism.

I may say to your eminences that almost to this day, there have been alternating periods of

Crusades and religious struggles for supremacy of one sect over another, even Christians against Christians.

Are not your reverences, all you prelates here assembled, in contention with, even opposition to, another group of ecclesiastics who equally believe themselves to be in the right. This always reminds me of those years in the early part of the fourteenth century, when, in 1309, one of your holy fathers, your Pope, was in a palace at Avignon, and another at Rome.

I will speak to you of that incident when I mention my visits in France."

The Theologian, seeing that Ahasuerus had closed this branch of his subject, inquired of him, "Were not these Crusades noble efforts of holy men, were not the participants earnest and brave?"

Ahasuerus replied, "Your eminence, naturally from your point of view, with your sectarian prejudices it seems so to you, but would you have my unbiased opinion, I must say they were brave, yet inspired by an unnatural zeal. Again and again that same error has moved religious



men to act unwisely. There has existed from time to time that narrowness among members of your sect, not realizing that the religion of our neighbors should be considered and respected.

The thread of my narrative carries me here, your reverences, to a land whose early history is perhaps less interesting to the members of this Conclave, yet one to which I pray you to give attention."

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE NORTHMEN

“ I PASSED through Britain when the Northmen under Olaf and Swegen descended on those islands and conquered that land. They afterwards continued their voyage of invasion to the northern shore of France. Swegen was a member of your sect; in the beginning of the eleventh century he became King of England. When in my wanderings I appeared in his court, he pointed his finger at me with scorn; in bitterness he addressed me saying, ‘ Thou didst turn from our Lord and Master when he needed thy assistance, thou should’st not tarry here among the followers of that Divine Man.’ I felt deeply wounded by his reproach, and went away as he bade me.

In time many of those Northmen crossed the sea again, colonized and remained in Northern France. They gradually became more satis-

fied with such resting-places and homes ; civilization by degrees pleased them. As a rule the majority of the Northmen preferred and endured adventure, cold, hunger and toil, if only they could gratify their desire of conquest.

As I encountered them in Britain, in France, the islands of the great sea, the Mediterranean, in Sicily and elsewhere, I found them adapting themselves to the manners, language and religion of the people, and often by their northern energy they improved and added to the enterprise of the nations where they settled. Each Southern colony must indeed have been another world, in comparison with the barren lands they had forsaken in the North.

Your reverences must know that the climate of those islands was not always rigorous. In my long life there have been great changes of temperature in those countries where the Northmen originally lived. I remember when islands and peninsulas in the northern regions were blessed with a temperate climate. Valleys that are now perennially filled with snow, were at that time exposed to genial sunlight, which ripened

fruits and harvests that now are unknown in those lands, that now have been during centuries sealed up with ice. Yes, your eminences, those Northern Islands have changed, as those that remain there now suffer from chill, and blast, and storm, so at times my wandering heart loses its ardor.

My life is a cheerless waste; I feel an inexpressible want of consolation, yet I cannot tarry to be consoled. I must go, must wander; let me tell your reverences, however, that I do find moments of relaxation everywhere.

I found entertainment among those ruddy Norsemen; their habits, their customs, and their limited literature interested and diverted me in dreary places.

I have read their Eddas and have listened many a night by camp-fires, to their legends and traditions, yet in all my journeyings, even to the White Sea, I have never been able to satisfy myself where they all came from, when they settled in the most northern points of Sweden and Norway. One fact is most worthy of remark. When I first saw them in the fourth

century, they already knew of the sufferings and sacrifice of the God Man, who came to save the human race, and they adored him.

These wonderful sights, these opportunities for gaining information in all those strange countries, have, in some measure, atoned for my erratic life. I wander! yes, I wander! I acknowledge my error, I am Ashasuerus, not Cartaphilus, the guardsman, at Pilate's door; he pushed your Saviour rudely. No, I am Ahasuerus the son of the carpenter, and I accept with patience the continued suffering meted out to me. I pray only by daylight of course for my father daily laying down his hammer and saw taught me that with the going down of the sun, the gates of heaven are closed!

Though I gain not my cause, it is always a satisfaction to speak with our Father in heaven; earthly kings are often inaccessible, but the Sovereign of the Universe lends an ear to the humblest suppliant. If he, the infinite one, forgiveth not, what shall we expect of mortal man reared in the dreary confines of the extreme North. When in those ice-bound islands of

the Polar Sea, again came the hope to me that death might bring the consolation I have sought these fourteen hundred years. War, fire, famine, disease and even lightning have that boon refused.

I sought to let my vitals freeze, but an unnatural counteraction gave me a glow that warned me I must march on. Through those Northmen's lands I strode on my monotonous way, always seeing men that dreaded death, that longed with every breath to live—to live—to live! I envied them, knowing that their hopes were vain. That bleak region had a remarkable influence on my aged frame; twelve times have I renewed my youth and my forces, while sojourning among those Northmen in their cheerless refuges. They always interested me.

I have also met them on the isles of Britain, where I have listened to the mysterious stories of strange men, who in the midst of winter have sat with them before the blazing logs, relating their adventures with hungry animals in the drifts of snow, which had impeded their progress. On all such occasions at night, some part of

their conversation was certain to include the question of a future life. Then the children listened and were concerned; but when they heard of frightful gnomes which had been met by the way, the little ones trembled with fear, which they forgot, however, when they too became Northmen.

Reverend Theologian, the consideration of these hardy men of the North, leads me in the next place to speak to you of the land which they at first invaded, and with the settlement of which they were so intimately connected."

## CHAPTER XIX

### BRITAIN

“SINCE the commencement of my wandering, I have not gone where I wished or intended. I have moved on where the inevitable power of my doom has forced me to go. Although almost impossible for me to choose my route, I did often shrink from visiting that important island lying north of France, and west of the main continent of Europe; at one time known as the land of the angles.

What we now know as England, did not bear that name until well on into the eleventh century. It was when the people of Britain became independent of Rome. They were then an admixture of Celts, Teutons, and Northmen, who laid the foundation on which was created a nation, destined to become as great as we see England in this year of your conclave. The climate of that island was painfully rigorous



in the second and third centuries, while to the north a warm sea moderated the temperature; that island was on account of its peculiar position frequently enveloped in cold mists, so that for a long period only the most hardy races from the extreme North cared to colonize there.

As they were hardy, so were they industrious. Now in this sixteenth century idleness is not tolerated there. With all respect for your doctrines and opinions, the land of Angles, for that very reason, never willingly tolerated monasteries, where men under the cloak of piety, could live a life of indolence.

That industrious population resisted the location of all those communities, wherever they sought to form asylums. Still they were Christians, those early English; no sooner were they convinced of the truth of Christianity, than they set up throughout the land the simple emblem of their new faith.

On every hilltop crosses were raised, and the nation always bowed in respectful recognition of that sacred emblem.

At this opening of the sixteenth century,

Britain or England is the most Christian nation of the world.

It does seem to me, your reverences, that cities at times after serious conflagrations, have risen into greater magnificence ; so England after all the invasions and scourgings of the earlier centuries, has long since become a model of all that is great and good, and where once stood mystic shrines, temples have risen everywhere to the true God.

I have always realized the force of religion ; it has been my chief concern wherever I have gone. In many climes I have been impressed that the towers and spires at places of worship on the hilltops, were pointing to the Divine Being on high in whose honor they had been erected. And in no country do they more greatly abound than in this England, the ancient home of the Northmen."

## CHAPTER XX

### DANEMARK

“ I WOULD remind the prelates who have given attention to the two sections of my narrative, that though I am about to speak of another national organization, it was still those adventurers of the almost polar regions, who founded the country on which I shall give you a short notice. It was a branch of those same Northmen who joined in the enterprising group of Scandinavians, and settled Denmark.

They took possession of, and built habitations in, the islands Fünen, Zeeland, Falster, Laaland, Langeland, and the peninsula extending north from the continent bounded on the west by the North Sea, and on the east by the Baltic.

They were indeed a nation of men of great endurance; from the earliest foundation of the nation they were brave warriors, seeking and making conquests on the Baltic Sea. Courteous

and friendly to strangers and tolerant to Israelites, giving all emigrants every opportunity to join in the great enterprise of making a living.

We have passed in a few moments consideration the ages in which each nation was founded and established.

What changes are to be seen in such a lifetime as my erratic existence has witnessed.

At one time Danemark was encroaching so on the shores of the east sea, to the north of the main continent, that the surrounding nations formed military orders of chivalry, whose members succeeded finally in crippling the power of the depredating Danish hordes.

I may mention to your ecclesiastical assembly, that for several centuries during my visits to the north, the east, and the west of Europe, I still found many pagans in Danemark. It required time and much effort to win them over to your faith. In fact there were many forms and systems of worship existing in those islands, even in the second and third centuries.

The belief in Baal was still flourishing; you may perhaps ask what that worship was; the

adoration of a man, not their ancestor, but ancient Belus, King of Assyria, whom they set up for adoration, in figures of stone, metal and wood. What power could he have had, to help those who prayed and made sacrifices to his memory? He had lived long before the worship to him was set up. His existence had ended. He had yielded his body to worms which had left but ashes. Many of the people of northern nations continued to believe, or professed to have faith in the worship of Baal, because they perceived the simplicity of the religion of Christ offered to them, and they feared its power to supplant the mythical faith of their fathers.

Therefore they discouraged even the consideration of Christianity. Little by little, however, the Danes followed other nations of the North, learned of Christ, and once that they understood his message of love, they accepted and held fast to the promise of his saving power. Simple and beautiful as was the religion of the God Man whom I repulsed in his moment of suffering, it was only propagated slowly in these islands of the Baltic Sea. Yet like certain seeds, when it

did take root, it held fast, and has become a power in the final civilization of Europe.

I found that during the driving cold winds of the cheerless winters in Danemark, the people kept closer to their hearth-stones, through superstitious fear. Their literature gave them wonderful stories and rumors of the appearance of mythical terrors in their region. Even when I passed through their villages, children regarded me with manifest fear; such were the stories told of my mysterious life, that women, children, and even stalwart men feared to see me pass. All men were warned to shun me. Where and how could I console my heart! My soul rebelled; but cold or heat, I was forced to encounter; I still marched on, through Danemark to other settlements and people on that Northern Sea."

## CHAPTER XXI

### HOLLAND

“WHEN in the second century A. D. I visited the Frisians, they were the principal or more important inhabitants of Holland. They had followed the original Celts, and when I spoke with them, they inferred by their expressions of contentment, that they had really found a country where they could establish themselves. I still saw there descendants of the Eburones, the Chamavi, the Bructeri, the Usipets, the Cambri, and other rugged emigrants from the North. Like almost all the new nations of Europe, they had been conquered and appropriated by the stronger Southern powers. In the third century the Franks took possession, and during their control there were continual struggles.

I met there the noblest princes, strong, well-developed, beautiful men, brave, chivalrous, but at times among them rose vicious intriguers. Certain features of their government were peculiarly

oppressive. The rich estates had the right to claim military protection, and receive defense in proportion to the taxes levied upon them. It was not until the time of Dagobert I, in the seventh century that your Christian religion was introduced into the Netherlands.

Fifty years later, Willibroard, a Bishop, gave strength to the new faith, which from that time forward was well founded, for it stood the strife of paganism, and the attacks of men of many faiths.

In the eighth century, Wolfram of Sens became a great pillar of the church, and later Saint Boniface. Charles the Great was powerful, stern, and his determination conquered the minds and hearts of doubting pagans.

Several centuries saw many monarchs from various countries in power. Just now since 1304 I have seen William III on the throne, giving promise of a wise administration. I went among the people as much as possible ; on their boats, into their religious meetings, inspected their trades, and generally was made welcome by all classes.

Their very curiosity in my strange personality,



caused them to receive me, and desire to speak with me.

However, one day at a village fair, I was just walking away from a booth of carved wooden ware, when a surly fellow recognized me, and cried after me, 'Go on, you Hebrew crane, we know you here. You scourged our Saviour in Jerusalem; you did not heed him, when, trembling with fatigue, he spoke to you. And when he tottered and fell with the cross, you struck him with a leather strap, as heartless men do beat a fallen horse to make him rise and resume his toil.' Your reverences, this was a libel on me, but what could I do? It was useless to reply to angry, unreasonable men. I moved on, wounded, not incensed, for I must confess to your eminences, I did respect those earnest Christians of Holland, they were so consistent."

"Our old friend," said the Moderator Theologian, with increased interest, "we hear you from day to day; we are about to close the day's session; I am sure we are all grateful for your interesting recital, and after repose we hope to meet again in this sacred precinct."

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE DRUIDS

“ I WISH to speak to your reverences to-day of an ancient religious people. We cannot speak of them as a nation. A sect that within the shadows of colossal stone monuments, gathered in several parts of Europe, for their peculiar devotions. We may safely speak of them as a religious sect; traditions describe their strange services amidst their ponderous monuments. Of these, great monoliths still exist in France, England, and at Walcheren in Holland, where I saw their altars.

They do not seem to have had what you call a home; they were nomads, but seemed to have moved from one station of their community to another, in different parts of this continent of Europe.

Wherever I have wandered I have found all men to have some form of religion, either of

their own invention, inherited, or revealed. Amongst the most impressive and yet reasonable, were the religious services of those Druids. They stood amidst those stone monoliths and before their stone altars, to express daily the gratitude of their hearts for mercies received.

In fact theirs was one of the earliest forms of worship in Gaul. Notwithstanding the strangeness of their ceremonies they seem to have believed in a Divine Creator of the universe and of themselves. Although their sect, and their form of religious worship were in their decline, in Gaul, before the time of Cæsar, we know that membership in their order was not so easily gained as is connection with your church, nor was it so simple as your religious belief in one divine man as a Saviour. Novices had to submit to rigorous training of more than fifteen years before they could be received into full membership.

A belief in the immortality of the soul added to their adoration of the morning sun, the ever-returning and comforting orb of day, satisfied thousands of earnest souls eager for consolation.

In their human sacrifices which occurred very rarely, the life then given up was of an offender, one who was unworthy of existence.

I have seen ceremonies in the retreats among their favorite oak-tree groves. They performed some thrilling acts. I was greatly impressed when I witnessed their anguineum, a serpent's egg floating against the current of running water; even when a strong wind should have driven it in a contrary direction it ascended a stream.

At times this egg was thrown in the air, when a brother, to ascertain his good or ill fortune, sought to catch it. Strange people were they! Seers were they! Magi found those wonderful Menhirs and stone Cromlechs in Morbihan; they so arranged them that all who stood directly before their altar stone, could see and adore the rising monarch of the day; for at that epoch, the line of the avenue beyond that altar stone left not even an intervening branch between the dawning sun and the worshippers.

I remember that the oldest inhabitants held the tradition that another wanderer, an evil

spirit, had been forced to move all these great stones, and place them here in this order as also in Wiltshire in England.

Naturally only some inferior evil one could have been conscripted; the chief of Satanic power has never served personally. It has always been his prerogative to rule. The Prince of Darkness has indeed proved himself a monarch.

When walking through Morbihan in France, on a bright moonlight night, I noticed men in white robes moving about, standing before one Menhir after another; occasionally they would prostrate themselves during a few moments as in devotion. I counted about one thousand monoliths at Kermario, and near Carnac I saw Menhirs standing like a great army of stones, their narrowest ends entering the earth; there were at times over ten thousand, though inhabitants of the region with whom I conversed informed me that several thousand monoliths had been destroyed, broken up, and used for the construction of walls. Every Menhir, so broken up, yielded from forty to fifty tons of building material.

In the close of the first century on going through Britain, I saw a number of Druids in that almost island,—Anglesea. That little peninsula was then only connected by a narrow strip of sandy soil, which some three hundred years later was completely washed through.

The Druids lingered longer there than in the interior country. Already in 41 A. D. the Emperor Claudius had given orders for the suppression of the Druids; although their ranks contained men of dignity and nobility, their peculiar religious opinions were such as condemned them in the eyes of the Roman Emperor.

On returning to Anglesea twenty years later, I found that the Roman troops under Suetonius Paulinus, had disturbed them, and they were scattered. In 78 A. D. they were really driven away, though their faith held sway during many years in the mind of the Celtic tribes, who were inclined to superstitious beliefs, and frequently resorted to those stone altars to greet the morning sun. Those Celts still believed that the snake's egg still floated against the current of the floating sea, so that when the wind blew from

the land and from the east, though the sea naturally flowed in the direction driven by the wind, the egg stubbornly moved towards the quarter from which the wind came.

With the growth and establishment of your religion, I saw many isms vanish from the earth, and so disappeared all traces of the Druids except their monoliths.

Your eminence, a member of this conclave has asked me to give my experience of my relations with some Christian country ; I will speak to you of France, after a night's repose."

## CHAPTER XXIII

### FRANCE

ON reassembling Ahasuerus continued,

“The interest your reverences feel in that country is very natural and reasonable. France, outside of Rome, at this moment is the very household of Roman Catholicism. At first known as Ancient Gaul, that country was in a measure settled by Germans, and even colonized by emigrants from Asia. France, the country beautiful, has often sheltered me when moving across the continent.

Under certain dynasties, thousands of my race found happy homes within its borders. I have known it long and well. I know its seaboard, its rivers, its mountains, its plains, its hospitable cities.

To the credit of your denomination, wherever one may go in that fair land of Gaul, symbols of Christianity rise from the domes and spires of your houses of worship.



For you, probably I know nothing of great interest in France, until the political incident in the end of the fifth century, when Clovis I, son of Childeric, turned out the Roman hordes from part of Gaul, and the Merovingian dynasty was founded. Clovis was the first Christian King of France. During a long period there arose great defenders of the faith, which was frequently imperiled by various invasions of Arabs, barbarians, and vandals. The Mahometan power in the eighth century was great; it threatened to sweep European civilization and Christianity from the continent. Happily for your people, valiant Leo of Isauria, defended the city of Constantine against the Mussulmans.

In that century I turned to France in the fond hope, that with that people, in that beautiful country, I might find repose. Alas the Merovingians were brutal, never at peace among themselves. They could not tolerate Jews; I could not disguise my features; away they sent me at that time onward, ever onward—but it was to return in another hundred years, under more gentle and reasonable rulers.

In the tenth century Northmen who had become Christians, having espoused your faith, colonized in Rouen, and expanding their settlements by degrees to St. Malo, founded the land of the Normans, later known as Normandy.

King Odo gave the estuary of the Seine to them, which added to their commercial power.

The religious events in the history of France will be more interesting to you than either its commercial progress or political record.

During the last years of the thirteenth, and far through the fourteenth centuries, there were serious schisms; everywhere dissensions in the councils of the Roman Church.

Men in power and those seeking place and power, were striving to advance themselves. Your profession of prelates of the Church was then a business enterprise, like any other commercial undertaking.

Divines sought favor and opulence for themselves, and once in position, they thought of their friends, and sought to place them in lucrative offices.

In all those years throughout more than half

a century, the Christian world beheld that intolerable spectacle of bitter dissension. The thrones of two holy fathers or pontiffs, one in Italy at Rome, the other the rightful Pope, compelled to live at unreasonable expense at Avignon in France. Permit me to say to you holy men here assembled, that was a pitiable sight; both Popes acknowledged equally to be holy, and yet attacking one another with counter excommunications and reproaches, yes, even anathemas in the form of Bulls.

I that have lived through all these centuries can assure you that the exiled Popes in France, Clement VI, Innocent VI, Urban V, and Gregory XI, were the true fathers of the Church; Those Popes who for the sake of religion and for peace, were forced to leave the scene of contention in Rome, and to knock at the door of France for an asylum.

When they were established in Avignon they administered justly the affairs of the holy chair, and in every way attended to the true interests of the faith.

After 1499, harmony was restored, and Rome

again became the home of the Popes. Those difficulties in the church led to many assemblies such as you have formed, and even secret conclaves, with a view sometimes of reuniting and pacifying the Church of St. Peter, but oftener to obtain power for the delegates assembled.

The idea of the fathers of the Church handing down to all nations their missals of prayers, certainly overcame one difficulty in the early centuries in France. In the *Moyen age*, the language in France differed in the northern and southern sections. The language south of the Loire was called the '*langue d'oc*,' whilst the language spoken by the people north of that river was the '*langue d'oïl*.' For example, there was this marked difference, in speaking their language, that those in the *Midi* or south said '*och*' for yes, whilst in the north '*oïl*' signified yes. The oil language was formed in the north where the Latin had been spoken until a later date than elsewhere.

Colonists of many nationalities had occupied the northern provinces, and the language there

had a harshness which was not found in the Meridian or south.

This language, d'oil of the north, had tones or sounds, which were very sonorous, and contributed much to the construction and beauty of the French language as known and spoken in this sixteenth century.

What may chiefly interest this conclave is the fact that to-day, France is the seat of continental learning, and the mass of its population profess and live up to the tenets of your Catholic Church.

If the Moderator Theologian feels that your august assembly has yet time this evening, to hear from the old traveler, I will take you but a short distance with the hope of again interesting you. Like the emigrants eight centuries ago, we have only to cross the boundary river, when I will speak to you of a large section of the Eastern world, in fact that important country in which your excellencies are assembled.

You are meeting here to strengthen the bonds and forces of your church in this country—Germany. Yet dissensions have disturbed the harmony of your association."

## CHAPTER XXIV

### GERMANY

“IT was not until 400 years ago, that I heard of your enterprising ancestors—called Germans. I have known and mingled with the Istaevones on the banks of the great river Rhine. In the central districts were the more numerous Hermionones; they were tall, vigorous men, and lived simply and long, that is those who were not cut off in battle or the hunt, for they were from all times inveterate warriors and hunters. Early in their career, most of their communities were divided into several castes or classes; slaves, freemen, merchantmen, and nobility. When journeying in their northern country, I found them trusting in gods of the air, the sky, and many mythological divinities peculiar to their race.

At Koeln, on the great river, I saw a statue in

massive silver, representing one of their principal divinities; pilgrims by thousands came there from every direction, and affectionately regarded that statue under the name of Teutis.

As soon as there was a prospect of commerce in your country, members of my downtrodden race, seeking life, and light, and sustenance, colonized among your people. I, with the natural prejudices of a Jew of Jerusalem, thought also to stop there. I, the son of a carpenter of the Holy City, felt that my race would take their part in elevating your nation which they adopted. Many of them married there, and some accepted your religion.

I have made frequent visits to Nuremberg. In 1309 I happened to be here when another conclave was assembled, to consider the difficulty which had arisen, when one of your Popes was compelled to seek a place for the pontifical chair at Avignon.

I think of my people whenever I come here to Nuremberg, where now stands your Frauenkirche.

In 1348, on that very spot was a synagogue,

where my race peacefully worshiped as they were wont to do, but the authorities of your church would not tolerate our inoffensive tabernacle, so that in the next year it was razed to the ground. Persecution was then the lot of the children of Israel in your country.

Your people believed in the miracles wrought by St. Sebaldus. My people did not frown on you for your delusions, nor did they interfere with your ceremonies.

Perhaps, however, our trials were blessings in disguise, for we have striven to live at peace with the German nation, and to-day we are happily established throughout your land.

The principal important events in the history of your church, have occurred in my weary life. When Arius the Alexandrian priest went before the Byzantine people, with his proposed amendments to the mysterious doctrines of your Church, Constantine called a council, somewhat similar to that in which you are now sitting. It was known as the Council of Nice. Then and there the Nicæan creed was drawn up. I, though always an Israelite, have felt a deep con-



cern in all those events, and after due consideration, I sometimes have not wondered at the aversion of your church to my race.

From my earliest knowledge of the forefathers of some of you Germans, they were a people of war; that was their favorite occupation. Led on by their chiefs they deemed it less honorable to earn by manual labor, what they found they could obtain by military conquest.

What nourishment, vegetable and cereal, as could be obtained from the soil, was earned by the labor of their women in the fields. True, the Germans were examples of manly courage and female virtue. Their name as a nation, Germani, by which they were known, implied that they were natural warriors.

The Germans on the west, crossed the frontier river in the fourth century, and after conflicts with the Gauls, settled for a while in what is now France.

Your ancestors were not only vigorous, but were intelligent and enterprising. From that German race rose the very Merovingian kings that afterwards sat in power in France.

You have only to imagine that we cross the Pyrenees to the west, and we find ourselves in another country, where the doctrines of your Church and its adherents predominated."

## CHAPTER XXV

### SPAIN

“WHEN in young life I, Ahasuerus, was forced to commence my walks about the world, it seemed to me, as it did to my fellow-countrymen, that Iberia was on the horizon, and that when the day closed and night was upon us, it was because the sun had set behind the Iberian Mountains, and that from those heights one might look out on to the vast expanse of the great salt river, of which men knew no other barrier. Although several Phœnician expeditions from Carthage visited and sought to open up commercial relations with the Iberians and Celts who were already established on those shores.

My father taught me of evenings, from his old manuscripts, and there I learned that the most westerly country of our continent was known by the ancient tribes of our faith as Tarshish.

As a boy I learned of the Roman occupation of that distant land by Pompey, afterwards by Cæsar, and again under the legions of the Emperor Augustus.

When I went there in the second century, I visited only towns on the seacoast, already founded by the enterprising Phœnician mariners, which had already been improved and beautified by the Roman occupation. I entered Taracensis, Lusitania, and Bætica, and floated in a primitive boat down the Bætis, now the Guadalquivir.

On returning there a century later the Emperor Vespasian was ruling over nearly 400 cities. That country, now Catholic Spain, grew and increased in prosperous provinces.

In the third century that progress was arrested by Frankish invasions. I therefore avoided the peninsula and crossed to the home of the Moors, in North Africa, and although I continued to see evidences of sincerity, in the strange religious ceremonies of the Moorish tribes of that epoch, I learned of their bitter hatred of the Iberians, and saw that their in-

vasions of Spain were rather for conquest and booty, than through any truly religious prejudice.

These marauding attacks continued to annoy the early adherents to your religion in Spain. Again in the fifth century barbarians ravished the country.

I saw the occupation and rule of the Visigoths; fortunately I was away in China, when the barbarous Arabs interrupted the course of civilization in Spain.

Notwithstanding all the Moorish invasions, which were really plundering expeditions, the country survived wonderfully all those periods of trial. Although those expeditions were attended with even greater success than the Moors had expected, the wonderful power of your Christian Catholic Church was not seriously weakened.

My race were largely represented in that country; and as ever, they were the victims of great persecution.

I witnessed the dispersion of my people; neither historians nor your reverences should

wonder, that after years and years of cruel treatment, my suffering race, stung by their wrongs, arose and helped the Moors in their invasion of Spain.

Though I was frequently interested in that Spanish peninsula, yet I remember nothing important for my recital before you, until during and after the Mahometan rule. Even then there were constant scenes of warfare and political strife. Much of the time Spain was under the rule of an Eastern Caliphate, all of whose mandates emanated from the Moslems of Baghdad and Damascus. Heartrending are my recollections of several succeeding eras.

In the ninth and tenth centuries your Christian sect, under Alfonso III, he whom they called 'Great,' established more permanently your Catholic religion which, with varying stability, has become more and more the faith of Spain.

I naturally remember vividly an incident in the close of the eleventh century, when, after the conquest of Saragossa, the excited people recognized me as a stranger and a Jew; some ruffians cried out against me; I was soon fol-

lowed by an infuriated mob, taken before a magistrate and charged with mendacity. Fortunately as in the trying scene of your Redeemer's life, there arose on that occasion a spirit of justice in the mind of the magistrate, who nobly saved me from their wrath, and graciously secreted me in his house during some days, until the tumult had subsided, when at night he accompanied me without the town, and safely I resumed my wanderings.

In mingling among those people at other times, I saw Christians compelled to profess Mahometanism. They were husbandmen in the suburbs of one of the earliest cities of Spain, then known as Gades, since called Cadiz. The original success of that city was owing to the colonizing enterprise of the Phœnicians."

The Moderating Theologian addressing the old man said, "My aged friend, you must have seen many administrations in the Spanish peninsula." "Yes, your reverence, and I saw great and continual changes. Well do I remember when the various nations along the entire length and breadth of the shores of the Mediterranean,

looked for defense and protection from the great parent empire at Rome.

In many of the old sacred buildings in Spain, I saw effigies which I at first supposed were representations of a wanderer like myself; however, they proved to be effigies of Saint Christopher, whom the legend of your church calls the ferryman of Christ.

In regard to the Roman Catholic prelates ruling through a long period of time in Spain, I must give you the result of my personal observations: I have often noticed that men in power frequently care more for their own comfort than the interest of their religion, whatever creed they may profess.

I often felt that many of the dignitaries of your Catholic Church in Spain, merited censure on that account. Yet in no country have the faithful of your sect contributed more generously to the erection and internal decoration of churches and cathedrals than throughout Spain."



## CHAPTER XXVI

### BAALBEC AND PALMYRA

“ FROM Spain, late in the autumn of the year 271 A. D., I walked through Italy ; the Emperor Aurelian was in power at Rome. I knew already his intentions in regard to Palmyra ; I had often wished to return there, and now, fearing that the crisis was near, I decided to make this second journey thither without passing through Rome. Seven weeks later I secured an engagement as deck hand on a sailing vessel with freight and soldiers sent by Aurelian as reinforcement for the Roman colonies.

We left Naples at night enroute to Northern Africa, where we touched at Carthage ; having previously visited that city when coming from Ouedna, I only remained while we disembarked the military and the stores. Thence to Sicily, where by night *Ætna* belched forth its terrible fire which for some hours lighted us on our way to Crete, Cyprus, Syra, to Berytus.

On arriving at Berytus, as soon as I could obtain release from my engagement on the ship, I went to land. There others fitted themselves out with camels, attendants and supplies for the overland journey ; while I, poor wandering pedestrian, strode away on my own legs with little or no preparation, always leaning on my faithful staff.

Many others, merchants, military, and caravan attendants being enroute, I decided to take the less frequented way by Baalbec.

Up and up—and over the Anti-Lebanon and through desolate wastes I found my way to Baalbec, after having passed the quarries where had been hewn the great stones of seventy and eighty feet in length and of proportionate breadth.

On entering the city one of the first objects arresting my attention was the temple of Jupiter erected by Antoninus Pius with the intention of propagating Paganism in Heliopolis. The people were already among the most idolatrous of Orientals.

Then I recognized that it was in Baalbec

where the people worshipped the god Baal, as the name of the city implies. It had an enclosing limit of about four miles. What especially interested me about the temples, was the enormous size of the monoliths of which the walls were constructed. In those temples the devout worshiped the sun and therefore at the time of my visit, the city was known as the Heliopolis of the desert. Men adored the sun when its rays dawned on those piles of stone. This form of religion I then learned had long before been introduced by Egyptian Colonists who had adopted that worship which in their country was deemed heretic. Two statues, those of Osiris and Isis, convinced me that they were the work of artists of that country first visited in my career—Egypt.

Similar immense blocks of stone were to be seen in the public buildings, and another temple built and ornamented by the Phœnicians was one of the grand features of the city of the Sun. When I visited the round temple of Venus and witnessed the revolting ceremonies, I thought of the contrast with the pure Christian religion.

The Emperor Constantine afterwards issued an edict against those licentious rites.

I had come to that city remote, as I thought, from civilization, hoping that there I would find no reminder of your Saviour, 'the Nazarene.' I thought that perhaps the tidings from Bethlehem of Judea had not reached Baalbec, and that Christ would not be known among those great walls which had so often resounded to the prayers and cries for consolation from the disciples of Baal.

But also at Baalbec there were Christians who had been banished from Alexandria—earnest Christians assembled at the setting of the sun to join one another in songs of praise and gratitude for mercies received. Once I would not believe that your people were right, yet everywhere I have seen convincing proofs of the power and truth of your Immanuel.

Seeing these despised Christians at their devotions, I was for a moment reminded of that day in my young life when I thought differently. As I saw Christ that day approaching with the cross, I could not resist expressing my hatred

of him. I looked upon him then as one who would supplant our king; in that light I regarded Christ as a usurper and an impostor. Now centuries after, when too late, alas, I know better. Although I admired Christianity, the penalty I was enduring for that error caused me to be wounded anew whenever I saw Christian assemblies.

Whilst we Israelites make no converts, thousands of Jews have accepted the religion of Christ.

In the first century I studied the question from sacred manuscripts in Hebrew, Greek and Latin.

During some fifty years I regarded your religion as a faith of yesterday; I now am convinced that it doth prepare a man for eternity.

I had viewed Baalbec's palaces, its streets well paved with great flat stones and supplied with fountains of water with passers-by; I had quitted the temple of Baal, the Temple of the Sun, and joined in the motley throng promenading on the terraces of the fortified walls.

Meeting with no further inducement to loiter, I turned my back on those ponderous walls and those grand temples as once more I started out on the red sands of the desert. Beyond the Anti-Lebanon, on my lonely way, I frequently encountered remains of travelers who had fallen by the way—the sight caused me regret that I too could not have ceased my existence then and there as I passed those skeletons—those monuments of human frailty bleaching under the rays of the sun, reposing alongside of the bones of camels and elephants.

No I could not share their lot! onward still onward! Turbaned strangers, Arabs, Ethiopians glanced at me for an instant and pursued their way; they thought not to interrogate me as your reverences do.

On the third day I did meet some one who spoke with me and who proved to be a God-given companion.

He was a Jew trader, David of Palmyra; I saw his camel stumble with the weight of the load and fall; the cord which bound the packages into the rack was detached, the merchan-

dise was scattered on the sand. I ran to the man's assistance; while we were trying to gather the load, two vultures, seeing the accident, quickly darted down and would have attacked the fallen camel on his bleeding neck had I not beaten them off with my long staff. I then assisted to raise his beast which grunted as though it was badly hurt; however, we loaded the rack and resumed our journey. The man was very grateful, and suggested that we should continue together—David being a resident of Palmyra, knew it better than I who had only been there once before.

Our journey was without many incidents, though the next day we overtook and passed a party of eighteen or twenty Jews with children on the way to Palmyra; they had encamped in a small oasis—they spoke with us and offered some of the broth they had brewed. Though our race has not been accredited with generosity it certainly is very philanthropic.

One wandering over the world is seldom alone; a cosmopolitan always meets some one with whom he may fraternize, so we walked to-

gether and became quite friends; David gave me much useful information.

Among the important facts he sought to impress upon my mind was his admiration of his Queen, the fair and good Zenobia. After walking seven long days, I espied in the distance, groups of palm-trees, and beyond them on the horizon dark objects with here and there a spot glistening with reflected sunlight which assured me that one more journey was nearly accomplished.

Later on I stopped during some minutes on an eminence looking down on the city we were about to enter; though not alone I mused and soliloquized. Memories of my earlier acquaintance with that flourishing oasis filled my thoughts. Palmyra probably was originally an Arab settlement. Although on a fertile oasis it was not an agricultural centre. Commerce was the object of that people; the trade of Palmyra was that of caravans which in the second and third centuries abounded. Like unto all human beings they intuitively felt the need of invisible divine protection, and to the extent of their in-



telligence they were devout worshipers of Baal, a deity whose effigy they adored.

That evening I saw the light of the setting sun on the then resplendent capital of Zenobia—Palmyra with its sumptuous palaces.

When at last we approached the Odænathus tower gate I quickly noticed that one of the sentries recognized in me a stranger; he even crossed the archway and consulted with the guard; he, however, concluded to let me pass; thus I was enabled to follow my companion to an apartment near the public markets, where I could find some repose and be near to the principal street of the city.

O; what sights there were on those streets of Palmyra—the camel drivers of so many eastern nationalities—Armenians, Egyptians, Persians, Asians, Saracens, slave dealers, fruit merchants, women of every type and color, bedecked with coins of all mintages.

My rest was light owing to the hilarity and cries of the multitude—so that early on each morning I found myself strolling in the charming thoroughfares.

It will be difficult for your reverences to imagine, or form an idea of the extent and grandeur of that city, with its triumphal arches at either entrance.

There was a double colonnade extending nearly to the outer walls at northwest to southeast, a distance of nearly four thousand feet. There were more than seven hundred columns about sixty feet high—towers through which arched ways led to other streets—domes, obelisks, palaces. The contrast of complexion and of costume in many of the throng, the pallid Persian faces with deep orange and black kerchiefs on their heads, the reddened cheeks of the southern Arabs, the black faces of Ethiopians in gowns and turbans of snowy white, all added to the showy picture. Itinerant pedlers crying their wares for sale, the noise of complaining animals being goaded. Again, resting-places—your reverences perhaps do not consider that true enjoyment should be found in gratification of the appetite, yet permit me to tell you that when I passed those bazaars, I saw men reclining with their heads thrown back drinking

golden wine from skin pouches, who evidently were finding the enjoyment they desired.

I looked at the various artisans in their little shops open to the air and sunlight—gem engravers,—and by chance I saw a Greek who had skillfully engraved a portrait-intaglio of the Queen and one likewise of her lamented husband, Odænathus.

There were many Greek incisori and other skilled workmen in the realm, already nominally a protectorate of the Roman empire. Palmyra had its characteristic ornamentations of jewels, the shops were showy with all imaginable art objects cunningly displayed to entice purchasers, citizens as well as strangers.

During my first visit I had seen and admired great and good Odænathus. This time, when the multitude were not yet on the streets, I took occasion to stand before certain monuments and pedestals of statues and consoled myself by reading the evidences of the appreciation of the valor and worth of Odænathus or Nypatikos, as his name was frequently inscribed. There were also similar inscriptions on the pedestals among

the columns in the long avenue which caused me to realize with regret that Aurelian was already reaching out his hand to obliterate all those evidences of real worth and grandeur. I felt that Rome could not brook or permit the undisturbed supremacy of such a rival. The government of Palmyra was at that moment fearing Aurelian.

Most nations I had found to be governed by tyrants, selfish autocrats ; here in Palmyra, Zenobia was loved by her subjects. Many said to me, ' When our queen is not here, it is not day ; her presence lights our world.'

I have seen the day in Palmyra when they spoke of Christianity as a superstition. I regarded with interest the worship of Baal, Baalites, Jews, Egyptians, Parsees, the followers of Zoroaster, for Sapor always had a colony of his minions residing at Palmyra.

You Christians of your Catholic faith are all children of your Pope and universally united.

In Palmyra there were hosts of pagans, but of many persuasions ; and again, they were divided among themselves ; each sect bowing down be-

fore its own chosen effigy—Jupiter, Minerva, Venus; each inanimate deity had its share of adoration. You may imagine how great was the number of shrines to accommodate the various worshipers. The majority of them resorted many times daily to the Greek ‘Temple of the Sun.’ Of a morning its hundreds of columns changed in color as the white marble was reddened by the rays of the rising sun.

No matter what country I visited in the civilized Orient, Grecian architecture and Grecian art excelled all others. The master ornamentation of that epoch was unquestionably planned by and executed by Grecian artists. I stood on the portico of the bourse among merchants of all branches of trade. Here and there street magicians were always eliciting the wonder of the idle crowd.

During another stroll through streets I found a larger stone tablet set into the temple wall with an inscription in memory of Odænathus. Odænathus was always regretted; he contributed much to the pleasure and comfort of his people.

During leisure moments of his reign, he was fond of manly sports; he never neglected the affairs of the nation, nor his religious duties; he was devoted to his queen wife, Zenobia, the gentlest of her sex, exacting obedience from all in power in her realm; she was of Arab ancestry, had associated with Jews, appreciated their worth and favored them when in her power. With a recognition of 'Divine Supremacy' ever in her heart, she withdrew regularly from entertainments and the excitement of the public games to attend to consultations on national affairs with the eminent Longinus. This lovely queen was a dark beauty; her snow-white teeth showed to advantage with her complexion and black eyes. With these thoughts I had fallen into a reverie; soon, however, the noise of the commercial throng roused me to less serious reflections.

Mordecaio Loevi, a member of the Royal Council who represented the interests of the Israelite citizens, called the attention of the queen to the fact that I, Ahasuerus, had in my wanderings again reached Palmyra.

Mordecaio was highly esteemed by our contingent, and generally by the court. He knew the law of Moses ; he was versed in the Hagio-grapha ; he had knowledge of the canon of Ezra ; he was authority on the Mischna and the Talmud.

At Mordecaio's suggestion Zenobia invited me to her presence. Already she had seen me when she had passed me in her chariot ; I then had stopped and respectfully saluted her ; she quickly gave me a glance of recognition, evidently noticing my venerable appearance, my peculiar personality, the contrast of my old attire with the gaudy costumes of the native multitude and with all my unique history, well-known to her, secured for me a kind look which emboldened me to hope that I might see her again.

On the following day one of the queen's retinue approached me and asked if I would come towards evening to the palace, as Her Majesty would speak with me.

I did not fail to keep the appointment and deeply appreciated the few minutes in which the queen questioned me. Her interest in me ap-

peared to increase as she learned more of my strange history and facts in regard to all the nations I had visited, just as I am now relating my experiences to your august reverences.

During the conversation Her Majesty insisted on my being seated. I confess that in my rude attire, I felt ill at ease in the midst of so much luxury.

I was not so much attracted by the embellishments of the atrium where I was speaking to Her Majesty as with the queen's royal beauty; it was that loveliness which attracted every one:—she was to me a noble sympathizing woman.

Zenobia was conscious of the adoration of her people—she realized the grandeur of her court; yet she was loath to accept advice that intended to strengthen her position.

She could not be made aware of the danger of offending Aurelius. With all her good qualities she would not incline her will to reason.

Her Majesty questioned me in regard to Aurelian; for reasons already given to your reverences, I wished to avoid the subject, know-



ing that no proper impression could be made by a direct exposition of the question. I finally said, 'As thy Majesty has asked my counsel I must say, that queen though thou art, beware of that man-emperor; take care not to offend Aurelius!'

The audience at an end, Zenobia informed me that she had not only been interested in my reminiscences, but she assured me that details I had given her of other lands were instructive.

Her Majesty sympathized with me in my estimation of Rome and its imperial aggrandizement. She expressed gratitude for the information I had given her in response to her many interrogations. As was my custom I refused her offer that I should partake of food, and felt pleasure at the evident regret with which she parted with me; nor was this my last audience with the Queen Empress.

I may remark at this point that Zenobia reigned in all a little more than five years!

On leaving the palace, I walked in a part of the city I had not yet seen. Many of the houses of the rich in the better quarters of Palmyra had

arched gateways and spacious courtyards within, with groups of animals in stone.

On days when the fêtes of the arena were about to occur, the streets leading to the amphitheatre were crowded with an excited, noisy multitude, hurrying to obtain good stand-points; they could not go quietly; their excitement caused them to shout, calling to those in advance or urging companions, in the rear, to advance.

Other sounds and sweeter strains at times came more welcome to my heart; there was a numerous colony of Israelites in this section; the music I heard with pleasure came from the harps of my people and songs in Hebrew of my race.

Within that very week I was permitted, even invited to converse with Zenobia again.

The Queen's interest in my store of historical knowledge of all nations, brought me, by invitation, into the arena where many of the most exciting diversions took place.

Her Royal Highness spoke Coptic, Syriac, Latin and Greek, so that she was able to converse fluently with the various guests who always found time to turn their eyes from the exciting

scenes of the arena and ensure Her Majesty that they were enjoying the combats.

Zenobia remained until 3 P. M., then Her Majesty retired for her daily conference with Longinus.

I confess that this concourse of lions, tigers, leopards and gladiators interested me deeply, but not in the sense that it did other spectators; my feeling was that I would willingly, yes gladly, have changed places with the noble beasts of the forest when I saw them expire in the conflict.

While on my way to the amphitheatre I saw the throng withdraw to the sidewalks of the street to make way for the train of great elephants drawing the vans and cages of angry wild animals which we now saw turned loose in the arena; they seemed to give up their lives freely, rather than suffer longer the pain of their bondage.

One admirable principle of your Church, you Catholic Christians do not approve of these cruel contests of wild animals in the arena, except as in the bull-fights of Spain.

When I looked upon those imprisoned noble animals, I did, at moments, wish that they might have seized with their vicious claws the more culpable beings who had entrapped and brought them from their native domains to fight and tear one another for the entertainment of the cruel audience ; I breathed with difficulty as I asked myself how could the municipality induce men, human beings, to suffer and to sacrifice their lives for the amusement of cowards that would see brave men die that they might be amused.

These entertainments rendered the people more and more brutal by affording them opportunities to gratify their taste for carnage.

An exhibition in the arena in which no blood was shed was not to the liking of the audience ; they delighted in seeing the lions and the tigers, especially when they fought with anger ; their greatest satisfaction was when these ferocious beasts lacerated one another, and no conflict was complete until one of the contestants was laid exhausted on the ground.

In defense of these gladiatorial entertainments, the people of Palmyra believed that witnessing

the contests of animals and accustoming themselves to seeing their blood and agony, helped to render them insensible to danger, and above all to relieve them from the fear of death.

The pagan Romans considered those weak and without courage who could not look on such scenes with indifference.

Among the redeeming qualities in the municipal management of Palmyra, as in other Oriental cities, I perceived evidences of civilization in their benevolent consideration of the horses and camels, which bore the heat of the day. At every corner were fountains supplied by aqueducts; there the passing animals could quench their thirst. All was life and movement in the streets. Continually with the animals arrived greater variety of costume and color; even the trappings of the beasts were decorated. Willingly I quit the busy scene and sought repose in the house of David who had accompanied me during my walk.

When making the journey from Berytus, I had enjoyed the sight of the caravans passing from the west.

Before quitting Palmyra, one day I ascended to a wooded terrace to the west of the city near Zenobia's palace. Looking down and over the great city, its palaces and towers to the desert beyond in the east, I became interested in the curious Persian caravans arriving from the dominions of Sapor; they were unique in appearance, those descendants of Zoroaster.

Of all the people I have met, they, though plainly attired, were the most peculiar type both in face, figure and costume. Such sights did for the moment relieve the tedium of my weary wandering life. Near me, on this hillside and on the plain beyond, I beheld the tower tombs, in which the Palmyrenes carefully deposited the ashes of their loved departed.

Indeed some of them were palatial resting-places for the dead. . . .

O with what risk does a statesman give his talents, his life, for the welfare of his sovereign! When disaster arrives, as in the case of Zenobia, the tried one—the faithful counsel—the defender is blamed and censured—and so did the beautiful, the gracious, the charming Zenobia

charge Longinus, the pure, the wise, the prudent, the devoted Longinus, yes, she rewarded him by unjustly charging him with having urged her to pursue the course that had resulted in disaster and in ruin.

\* \* \* \* \*

Years afterwards when witnessing other Roman invasions of peaceful realms, I remembered with painful regret how Aurelian finally conquered Palmyra, and after seizing Zenobia's treasures, imagined himself clement when he permitted that Queen to retire and live with the princes, her sons. Again in my miserable existence, I had felt that in Palmyra I would dwell, yet the doom of Christ's edict hung over me; I dared not stay. I was compelled to move on, and having gazed on that desert from the terrace, I now found myself striding away over those eastern sands on my way to Persia, the land of Sapor."

## CHAPTER XXVII

### PERSIA

“Now, your eminences, I propose to speak to you to-day of a people of the far East, who, in their country, knew less of your Church than almost any of the inhabitants of Asia.

Persia existed more than 2,000 years before the sad event which occurred in my unfortunate childhood, an event which has influenced my life to this day.

After China, Persia was perhaps the most ancient empire I have visited. In this sixteenth century your excellencies must know the saying ‘as old as the Medes and Persians.’

It was in the first years of the second century, A. D., when first I traversed the realm of the Parthians; yes, I remember it was in the tenth year of the second century, that I beheld the bartering for a throne; and while I was there Pacorus II sold the Crown of Edessa to Abgar VII bar Izat. It was on that occasion that I placed these two copper coins in the little sack on my breast. These dumb tokens, records of that event, have not deserted me; they at least have remained with me.



After the Persians had heard of Christ, and had learned something of Christianity, there arose a man called Manee, who founded a great religious sect, and created an ingenious system of religion, which for a while commanded the attention of Zoroastrians; even Christians were attracted by the beautiful sentiments of his plausible religious system.

In the third century, when, at Ctesiphon, hearing rumors of the approach of the Emperor Julian, with his army of about a hundred thousand men, I crossed the river Tigris, and passing along the northern bank of the canal, I met Julian's army on their way from the Euphrates. He had halted and was consulting with his staff officers, about the probability of crossing the Tigris. As I came near to them, I observed that brave Roman and warrior though he was, he and his men at arms were bowing before their mythical gods.

So well was I, Ahasuerus, known in all these eastern nations, that his imperial highness recognized me from afar, and immediately sent a subaltern to me requesting my attendance.

Knowing that I had just left Ctesiphon, he sought to gain from me all possible information in regard to the city, which he greatly desired to invest and conquer.

Even at that moment his thoughts were on religion, for being sorely pressed he felt the need of divine assistance.

Your excellencies, I have said divine aid, for he supposed in his blindness, that divinity abided in the stocks and stones to which he and his hosts bowed down, and whom they implored for help.

He felt they needed deliverance, for he perceived that he was being enclosed in a Persian net. He opened the subject to me by referring to that terrible decree of Jesus Christ, which accounted to him for finding me in this strange country, at this moment.

He had never been sincere in his profession of respect for the doctrines of Christ. Even at that moment he was regretting ever having listened to the advocates of Christianity.

In wishing me thus to advance the cause of paganism, he, Julian, really believed that if he

could induce me to urge the people of Ctesiphon, to honor the gods of his pagan followers, those gods might favor his enterprise and grant him success.

Julian addressing me said, ' Think of it, Ahasuerus ; have I not always trusted in the gods of my childhood? Have they not placed me on the chair of state? Can I continue to accept the new religion of Christ? No ! Ahasuerus, I not only realize that I must adhere to the faith of my fathers, but I ask that you, in your wanderings, may tell the nations of the power of my gods.'

I could have told the nations not of the power, but of the utter hopelessness of the dependence on such myths. Although I had cruelly treated Christ, I had then lived through centuries in which I became convinced of his divinity, the power of his religion, and the fallacy of trusting in the images which were Julian's gods and trust.

The emperor sought in vain to bombard and take Ctesiphon, and when he commenced the retreat of his vast army to the west and south,

Julian realized the Persian power; he was harassed and followed, until his death on the field at Samarah, finished the career of the apostate, gave lustre and spared dominions to Persia.

Your eminences, I witnessed the colossal preparations the Romans had made, before they dared to proceed against Persia; and when they did risk that invasion, they realized, when too late, that although they had mustered a great army, the Persian forces were invincible, and this was only a few years before Sapor died in 380 A. D.

And so, your reverences, there occurred intervals of peace, and again long series of struggles, war after war, and revolutions even in religion. Yet the sacred fire of the Zoroastrians continued to burn, and that beautiful emblem of fervent adoration, consoled that religious people, comforting them during many generations, until the Mahometan hordes, not only colonized in Persia, but introduced and established their belief in the prophet, and by degrees the nation bowed down to that holy man of Mecca.

One of the most astonishing features in the

faith of those Moslems was their utter unconcern, in the face of danger and death. That could be accounted for by the lesson taught them by their priests, that man never could expect true happiness, until transported by death, he should rejoin the prophet in a land of perfect bliss.

In time I moved from one realm to another, striving to comprehend the various forms of religion."

Here the Moderator Theologian interrupted Ahasuerus, saying, "Our old friend, you cannot do better than to speak to us of the Persian religion."

"Most honored prelate, I shall, with pleasure, answer you to the best of my ability. What shall I tell you? How shall I explain to you that which has always proved inexplicable to my mind? What I can tell you must suffice; for while endeavoring to explain the doctrines of Zoroaster to myself, my intellect could never unravel its complications. While seeking to fathom and understand them, the deeper my investigation, the more and more I became embarrassed with its consideration.

Zoroaster had promulgated his doctrines fifteen centuries before I came into his land, and among his followers, yet when I tarried among them at the time when they appeared again as a powerful religious sect, under the Sassanian rule, I saw that the principles inculcated by Zoroaster still pervaded the minds and hearts of all worshipers, which is even so to-day in this sixteenth century, A. D.

They recognized two deities, one Ormuzd, who was typical of all that was good, pure, and true; the other, Ahriman, symbolic of evil, uncleanness, falsehood, ruin.

Naturally the sum of all prayers of good Parsees was, that Ormuzd might prevail, and that they might profit by his conquering power. They felt that the life of the inhabitants of this earth was one continual conflict; those who preferred good contending ever with those who gave themselves up to the vitiating influences of Ahriman.

Every religious man felt that the contending powers were striving to win his soul. The earnest efforts of good men was

to secure the protection and blessing of Ormuzd.

At your request, I am relating what I have seen. I remember that in 650 A. D., the Parsees, after persecutions, fled from Persia to India, finding protection there under the Rajah of Guzerat. They revered fire and the sun as emblems of Ormuzd.

It was believed that Zoroaster had brought the sacred fire down from heaven, and his followers have always kept it burning. In some temples the fire is guarded below the surface of the ground, and never allowed to be extinguished. The priests of the Parsees attend the altars on which this sacred fire is kept. So sacred is this element which they worship that they do not employ it for cremation. They with conscientious scruples resort to other means of annihilating their dead, exposing the remains of their deceased loved ones to the voracious vultures, who quickly consume the mortal flesh.

Many of their devotions consist of vocal music; their ceremonies are often unique and impressive.

I have seen the ceremony of purifying the youth, and the investment of them with the girdle of their faith. I noticed the women of the priestly class wearing bands which contained seventy-two threads. When they had fastened the cords on the neophytes, I would willingly have partaken of the spices and fruits, which were presented to those attending the reception of the youths, but I was recognized as a Jew, and they passed me by. However, the women resembled the daughters of our race.

I saw them given in marriage.

One day in each year is celebrated in honor of Yezdajird, who commenced to reign in Persia, in the year 632 of your calendar.

I was at Teheran in 793 A. D. when the fête or birthday of Zoroaster was celebrated. The ceremonies were enlivened by the presentation of flowers and fruits.

When their country became thickly populated, the Persians went forth to conquer and colonize in other countries; they ruled with wisdom and moderation, as did Chosroes when he governed Egypt. Although I have shown you the better



side of the Persian character, my sojourn in their interesting country was, at times, not without some annoying incidents. Once at Ecbatana I was looking on at a public ceremony, when crowds of excited people cried out at me, mocking my great gray beard, and my rude apparel. They commenced to follow me; a good Samaritan, however, came to my relief, and speaking wisely to the throng, quieted their clamor; after all, I have to remember the Persian people with gratitude. I confess to your reverences, I thought on that occasion how our people in Jerusalem had treated your Saviour, and how unrelentingly we continued to mock Christ, even when good Rabbis counseled us to refrain. My presence here to-day with all these years on my head, is the penalty for the course my race pursued in those lamentable days.

At the capital Ecbatana I moved among the most pious Persians; there I frequently heard that sacred prayer, the Ahunô Vairyo.

The Persians esteemed that prayer most sacred, because it contained twenty-one words.

During the many centuries in which I visited

Persia, I had opportunities of weighing the character of their rulers.

Sapor I, whom I frequently encountered, and whom I could not really admire, hated Zenobia ; he could not forget that Odænathus had stood between Persia and Rome. Sapor looked upon his captive, the Emperor Valerian, as his slave ; he treated Valerian with indignity before the people whenever he appeared in the streets of Ecbatana.

One of the most remarkable and important events of that epoch was Sapor's victory over the Emperor Valerian, who was obliged to surrender to the Persian army, and become a prisoner in his realm. Sapor was then known as Shapoorec ; that was his greatest military achievement, when he drove Valerian into such an untenable position that he was forced to yield with his legion.

Though generally supposed to be magnanimous, Shapoorec treated Valerian during the remainder of his life, in a cowardly manner. After Valerian's death he contemptibly and cruelly removed the skin from the dead Emperor's body,

and prepared it with the insatiable desire of guarding a souvenir of that victory.

The capture of Valerian was sculptured in rock ; another colossal bas-relief represented the event in nearly one hundred figures. Ecbatana was indeed a grand city ; men slept there in security in those days within its seven walls, on which Sapor and his attendants were represented on horseback, while Valerian and the army attending him were represented on foot. Such was Ecbatana.

The grandest architecture, however, that I saw in Persia, was of the Achmenian, in the City of Persepolis.

During the reign of Sapor II the Emperor Julian, known as the Apostate, was encountered in battle and conquered.

Julian was, in my opinion, a great and learned man ; he had been educated under the instruction of the wisest pagan, Greek and Roman scholars ; their mythology had been his creed from infancy ; he had for policy sake for a time accepted Christ as the divine representative of the ruler of the universe, but was more inclined to the re-

ligious belief of his childhood, family, and people.

When we consider the justice and wisdom of his reign, we should respect his preference for the faith of his fathers. It has always seemed to me that the Persians ruled wisely, in that they permitted the government of countries conquered by them to continue in the royal hands as before their subjection; only in return for Persia's supervision and protection they collected from them a tribute.

Many of the rulers of these conquered nations were kings, and your reverences upon reflection will readily perceive why the parent Empire termed its ruler king of kings.

I have said that the more I have studied the religion of the Persians the more I have been mystified. The legend which gives us the source of the Zendavesta is strange enough to cause your reverences to wonder that such a religion could have been accepted by a nation otherwise very intelligent; that legend relates that Artaxerxes, when he once found himself politically secure, proceeded to strengthen the people

in their respect for a belief in the national religion. He therefore convened the wisest of the priesthood of the realm, and the most accredited soothsayers.

Then they chose from their number those whom they believed to be the most learned, until after continued selections the number on whom they intended to entrust with the religious administration, was reduced.

Again and again these numbers were diminished until that number from many thousands became a very small company, and from that small committee one member was chosen to be set apart. That man of their final choice was a priest, Ardâ Virâf, and proved to be a powerful representative of their religion. It was related that Virâf, after ablutions fell into a deep and continued sleep, rendered more profound by certain potions; his repose was closely observed, and after many days he awoke, and related the very words which are now to be found in the books of the Zendavesta, of which, in fact, were preserved several copies in manuscript written by Virâf.

When I, Ahasuerus, was in Ecbatana, the language spoken by the Persians was principally Pehlevi.

The Persian language was originally the Zend.

Just as the French and English languages have received or suffered great modifications, so the Zend or Persian language changed and became modified; and Pehlevi was adopted as the national language.

So complete was the change in the language comprehended by the people that Artaxerxes caused the Zendavesta to be translated into Pehlevi.

There was a feature under the government of Artaxerxes, which I think unfortunately resembled the power of your Church in Rome. That sovereign connected the religious functions with those of the state.

Of all the royal rulers I saw in the first four centuries, A. D., Artaxerxes seemed to me the wisest and the most competent. He anticipated the desire of your Church to be one with the national government, for he some time before

advocated and introduced the association of Church and state in Persia.

Naturally the religion recognized then in his empire was that of Zoroaster. Yet he did not exceed the Christians in their autocracy, for, as your reverences must know, that although the early Christians were obdurate and intolerant in the manner in which they would not acknowledge the rights of man to adopt any religion than their own, yet in Persia every man was expected to respect the sacred fire."

## CHAPTER XXVIII

MAR SABA

“IN speaking to you of this celebrated cloister, I will venture to express to your excellencies my opinion in regard to the propriety of a man retiring from active life among his fellowmen in this world. I have always been interested in those retreats known as monasteries.

Permit the liberty I am taking, but in all things I am giving you my unbiased opinion in connection with my historical statements. I have particularly considered those institutions where indolent, mistaken men have sought to escape the temptations of a life spent in usefulness among their fellowmen.

I cannot believe that the Supreme Ruler of the Universe can approve that manner of life which is tolerated by your Church. If adopting such a life is a religious duty, and if in obedience



to conscience all men should retire from the busy world, I ask myself, how would it be possible for independent communities to subsist?

However, during my wanderings, I have met and conversed with many sincere men who were celebrities of your Church. Among others Mar Saba.

In the year 493, on returning from one of my voyages among the islands inhabited by the Northmen, I went south to Syria and visited that holy man's monastery, not far from Jerusalem. It was just ten years after the Monks had established themselves there.

From century to century, on revisiting my native land, I have seen many competent brethren of the order assume power on that rock. I have also seen with what envious eyes the Moslems since their advent and occupation have regarded that cloister.

Notwithstanding my opinion which I have newly given to you, I envied at one time the tranquillity of those monks, and thinking perhaps to arrest my eternal wanderings, I offered also to become a recluse; notwithstanding my Jewish

descent, as you have long since perceived, I was convinced of the divinity of Christ.

I approached the brotherhood at Mar Saba; they listened to my plea, but in my physiognomy they discovered the inevitable mark of my ancestors; they recognized the Israelitish features of my race. Am I not branded, I thought to myself? In brief they denied my prayer, they pronounced my destiny to be just, and sent me hence to wander, and so I have never returned to Mar Saba."

## CHAPTER XXIX

### THEY SPOKE WITH MANY TONGUES

AHASUERUS now paused for a moment as one of the prelates, rising, with outstretched arm, signified his desire to speak. He was a Bohemian priest speaking the Chech language from Prague, who prayed the Moderating Theologian to ask the old man how he was enabled to speak with so many people the world over.

The Theologian complied with this request, asking the aged speaker whether he found everywhere men speaking Hebrew. Ahasuerus replied, "I may and will refer you for the information you have asked, to the Holy Bible, that book which should be sacred to you, and to all your sect. A compilation which has endured longer than most ancient documents, and which has been translated into almost all languages. See the words of St. Paul which you will find in the account rendered in the Acts of the Apostles

of events in the life of the man I once scorned. There you may read: In the house where holy men were come together, that day there came from heaven beyond the stars, as in a storm of wind, a great sound, which appealed to all who were assembled; they were impressed by apparitions, by cloven tongues as of fire, which hovered over them. They all felt the influence of a divine spirit, and soon they spoke with other tongues.

When this news reached Jerusalem, righteous Jews of many nations came together and marvelled, for all could understand what was said. For it seemed that each was spoken to in his own language.

In their astonishment they said, 'Are not these men of Galilee and many countries unknown to us, yet do we not hear every man, speaking to us, as in the words we have been accustomed to since childhood!

Though we are Elamites, Medes and Parthians, men of Cappadocia, of Judea, of Mesopotamia, Phrygia, Pontus, Asia, and Pamphylia in Egypt; Libya, Cyrene, strangers of Rome, Jews

and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, yet we all learn of the wonderful works of God, from these strange men speaking our tongues.'

Your request reminds me of an ancient event which occurred in that city bearing the name of 'The Gate of the City of the Gods.' There, under Etanna, a man who professed to be divinely inspired, workmen were engaged in erecting a tower more than six hundred feet high. Again, centuries after, others strove to complete it, but as the artisans came from so many nations there arose a difficulty in carrying out the orders of the overseers of the work. This led to that oft repeated legend of the confusion of tongues; yet having myself visited Babel, I have learned that just as I have been able to understand all the nations with whom I have had intercourse, so in time those workmen at that celebrated tower, were able to labor together; but the enterprise was too gigantic, and therefore the work on the 'Temple of the seven lights of the earth' was several times interrupted and really never completed.

The power of easily acquiring languages is

generally believed to be a gift. Naturally the continued opportunities I have had through my long existence, have enabled me to acquire a sufficient knowledge of languages, to understand and speak with most of the people I have met in my wanderings.

I have associated in these ages with people of so many countries that I no longer find any difficulty in conversing with them. I grant you it is in a measure a pleasure ; perhaps you may envy me, yet I frankly assure you that I should rather have known only the language of my fathers, and profound is my regret, that centuries ago I could not have been consigned to that bourne, where in absolute silence I should have ceased to hear any voices.

Knowledge is mine but no repose has been allotted to me. Now, your excellencies, I shall briefly report to you my impressions of that Oriental country, whose language is one of the most difficult, even for the natives themselves, to perfectly acquire,—China."

## CHAPTER XXX

### CHINA

“NATURALLY the traditions of China, and perhaps its most important history, concern events which occurred long before the epochs in which I have wandered. Yet the ‘Book of Rites,’ the *Le Ke*, though formulated twelve centuries before I was born, continued to be the guide of every Chinaman’s life, when I walked over the celestial domains. You, interested in the propaganda of your faith, will care more to hear what has been done for a nation holding itself so aloof from the manners and customs of Western nations.

In speaking to you of their religion and their ritual ceremonies, I will find difficulty in showing to you the difference between their objects of adoration, and those of whom we have always spoken of as pagans.

The idolatrous, grotesque figures made by them, and in which most of the people placed their trust, are entirely removed and different from the other great religion, wherein the Chinese through the teaching of Confucius, have other objects or temple ornaments, and their principal service is that of prayer to their ancestors, beseeching them to intercede for them, in fact, they implore mediation from the members of their immediate families, who by death have gone before.

In their gorgeous temples I found great display, hideous figures, intense color, more gold, and less fervor, than in almost any houses of worship in other lands.

Men passed by me in confusion, moved about among the grotesque images noisily, and with little evidence of a sense of worshipful propriety. Indeed, one might suppose that their bustle and hilarity was the form of adoration they had been taught to practice; fire and stifling, spicy fumes, seemed to give to the atmosphere that consistency in which they were accustomed to revel, and which they inhaled for the benefit of their souls.



When I passed through the Eastern Han district in the second century A. D., the provinces to the north of my route were visited by a virulent epidemic, which endured so persistently that I was not permitted to enter there.

In those days there were a number of rulers, all of whom were so equally powerful, that for the benefit of all they agreed to divide up the power of the realm among them; but in a short period dissensions and envious feelings caused each to claim that he alone was entitled to the entire empire, and they each sought to grasp the Imperial power. This through hundreds of years characterized the political career of all aspirants to Imperial authority.

The Chinese never willingly gave strangers facilities to learn their difficult language, yet at the same time they acquired and understood the languages of all the merchantmen who came either over land or by sea to their shores.

At first I knew their land as Serice, then I was received more courteously than in any other part of the habitable globe. I then found the people gentle, honorable, and in a sense civilized.

They did at first speak reluctantly with me, the more so because I did not want to buy or traffic with them, for their raw or woven silks. My Syrian countrymen knew little of Serice or China, but naturally I made the acquaintance of the entire known world.

When I was there in the thirteenth century China was known as Kitai, or Cathay ; then the Moguls began to rule throughout Southern China, and they knew it as 'All beneath the Sky.'

After all, I have brought away with me such a souvenir of my visits in Chi-na, the land of Chin, that I have long since resolved that wherever I may meet a Mongolian, including, of course, the Chinese, I shall treat them most courteously."

## CHAPTER XXXI

### INDIA

"COMING west through the peninsulas Siam, Burmah, the islands of Java, and Sumatra, I halted among millions of people, worshipping in the innocence of their hearts, the Creator and Ruler whom that great reformer, Buddha, had taught them to know and adore. And then I walked the great peninsula of India.

In India I encountered the strangest and most picturesque houses of worship of the world. While I strode from the tropics to the snow-topped Himalayas, in the temples of the Brahmins, adorned with sculptures, with innumerable gods, chiseled, painted, gilded, and withal grotesque. Before my time the Brahmins did not object to the preaching of Buddha, so that Brahmins and Buddhists fraternized.

In the seventh century I found great antagonism; they were each seeking to obtain the

power, the adherence of the greatest number of disciples. In Cashmir I visited monasteries and certainly saw and conversed with thousands of Buddhist monks, or young disciples fitting themselves for the work of the Church. Again in different parts of India during several centuries there existed varied contentions between the several religious denominations.

I was there when the Greeks invaded India in the early part of the fourth century.

In many provinces in India, natives would address me saying, 'Come, thou shalt bow down to our gods, they will save and bless you!' Among those Brahmins, those Hindus, each man repaired to his chosen corner or alcove in the temple, and heating his small ladle or spoon of oil, he poured it upon his head, bowed and knelt in prayer. The devotees were all intent on their sincere worship, and allowed me peacefully to observe the myriad deities, many of them sculptured in the very rocks, and the wonderful fantastic ornamentation of their holy places.

How strikingly it compared with the unpre-

tentious religion of the followers of the Holy Man who bore the Cross, that the human race might be reconciled, and find rest near his divine Father.

How great the contrast seemed as I stood among those men of India, and saw that they earnestly clung to the stone arms of those grotesque symbols of deity. In my wanderings I have sometimes asked, Shall not they, too, find rest? or must they eternally suffer for their misplaced faith?

I was attracted by their tender attentions to all animals, and especially to those which their priests taught them, and which, through their faith, were allowed to wander stupidly and listlessly over the very altars where their priests were intoning devotional aspirations, and often imploring for benefits they sadly needed.

Strange that I, a Jew, an outcast, should have such thoughts as often took possession of my mind before those pagan altars, when I wished that they might know of Christ, and India be blessed with the purity of your Saviour's faith."

## CHAPTER XXXII

### JAPAN

"YOUR Excellency," Ahasuerus said, after walking through the nave of the assembly hall for a little diversion, "perhaps you or some honorable prelate may suggest a preference for some remarks on a province in Europe. I will gladly reply to any demand."

A delegate immediately arose, and addressing the assembly stated that he, for his part, would prefer to hear of the far East, as the propaganda at Rome had suggested that he might be of service to the Church there. At the request of the Theologian, Ahasuerus complied, saying, "In the early years of the sixth century, these aged legs again turned with me to the East, and at that time to the extreme East.

Always inexplicable to me has been the impulse or power, that has sent me from one country to another.

After my strange experiences with those pagans of the Indian peninsula, I bent my way thence through China and Corea, to a group of islands bearing the cognomen of Nippon, now known by you as Japan.

As has always been my custom, I looked about me for some idea of the religion of that people. Legends and myths were given to me; I found a system of so-called divinity which in the belief of the people of those islands, was shared in turn by heavenly mythological deities, of which the visible recognized head in their world, or empire, was the supreme ruler, or Mikado. Then came one of the advanced guards of Buddhism. That belief, that religion, was taking the firm hold in Japan that it had been losing in India.

That young man who came to Japan with Buddha's message of love, was the Prince Shotoku Daishi, the son of the Emperor Yomei, of China. The prince had through some invisible divine power arrived with Buddha's important tidings, for the unsophisticated people of those islands who were only waiting for

some divine being in whom to place their trust.

Their original religion or belief had been Shintoism.

The people appeared to have had held up to them, the example of warriors, political, or celebrated men of other days. These were kept before them as examples which they should follow, and whose spirits they should implore for aid and protection.

The sum of what I saw in their so-called devotions, was the effort to secure all the pleasure possible in this life, and I understood that their mentors assured them that they would be wise in so doing, for soon age and decay and death would draw the curtain on all their joys.

The race seemed to me to be a mixture of Malay, Chinese, and Korean. The more peculiar and marked types were the little men I saw in the eastern and northern provinces. In the West I was evidently with the descendants of conquerors, and colonists from the western mainland. Those were the people who eagerly



listened and laid hold on the attractive tenets of Buddhism.

It was then about eighty years after the first Buddhist deities, or representations of incarnations of Buddha were carried into the country. It was not long before that religion was well established, and a majority of the people seemed to have accepted it. There were many devotees; whether it was their religious conviction, or the amiable character of the race, they were gentle, kind, and honest. Their language was not so difficult to master, as was the Chinese or the Hungarian. A strange fact in regard to it was that, although written in almost the same characters as Chinese, there is no absolute affinity with it or any other language.

Once Japanese is acquired one may go over the entire country, and be understood in almost every province.

Their ancient court was at Kioto, where the supreme authority and head of the church, the Mikado, lived.

As a nation they were very clannish. Unfortunately in the eleventh and twelfth centuries

the efforts of leaders of clans, who sought to secure high positions in the service of the Mikado for their friends and relations, through their intrigues led as in the history of every country to sanguinary encounters and revolutions."

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### RUSSIA

" I LEFT that nation of exclusive little men enjoying their primitive pleasures, crossed the narrow sea to the mainland. I strode through the ravines of Northern China, over the mountains of Eastern Asia, climbing the steppes, and passing through Siberia, directed my course to the more congenial climate of the shores of the Caspian Sea.

Then for awhile found some exhilaration and divertisement in the Caucasian paradise of Southern Russia. That vast empire caused me to walk great distances, for its domains to the north, to the south, the east, and the west, cover more than one-seventh of the habitable surface of this globe.

There in my earlier migrations I saw evidences of races long ago extinct, even the dwelling-places of prehistoric man, and ancient abandoned

paved roads that had served (heaven knows when) from one dwelling-place to another.

Naturally in cycles of time these roadways had been covered with the débris of ages; here and there cropped out evidences of walls of defense, and various implements of stone, of that age when such tools only were known.

The barren plains bore evidences everywhere of the migration of many races of mankind, some of whom had also employed bronze tools. Their long deserted mounds were evidently mortuary receptacles of hundreds of mixed races, who had all gone to partake of that repose denied to him who now addresses you, to him who had repulsed the Saviour of mankind.

When first I traversed Russia, it was a barren waste with here and there a village, before the Scandanavian princes had occupied and developed it. There were already many Jews in the settlements. I found the descendants of several families, whose ancestors had lived in Jerusalem near to my father's house. They did speak Hebrew fluently, having been born and educated in the country of their families' adoption. They

only had such knowledge of their ancestors' national language, as was necessary for the service in the Synagogue.

It seemed that all my race had wandered, for whatever land I visited, Jews had already preceded me. They were not rovers as I have been, but wanderers they were, to the extent of migration.

We are always recognized; our semitic origin is written on our brows. Many of our people in Russia had adopted costume which attracted every one's attention, particularly the red blouse of the men.

Many of those Israelites in Russia were fond of music. I halted in villages in the Caucasus, and once in an auberge near the Black Sea, I saw and heard an aged blind man entrancing his hearers as he discoursed to them on his violin. All were wrapt in attention, some were moved to tears, some looked earnestly up, as though the enchantment was heaven-given. Others moved their fingers involuntarily, but silently, on their knees, as though they could not resist the desire to accompany the musician. Some

leaned their elbows on their knees, and burying their foreheads in their hands, listened only to the strains of those chords which through the old man's skill appealed to their souls.

One day I strayed into an open court of a Russian church, near the Caspian Sea. While without, I imagined that the deep tones of an organ were contributing their strains to the worship. On entering, I found it was the melody of men's voices, who were intoning the litany of their faith.

I have not always been compelled to go on, or to continue my wanderings without regard to temperature or climate; naturally I have at times been overtaken by severe cold, and deep snow, or have sweltered in intense heat. Generally I have passed through most countries and continents, during their most favorable seasons.

At times I have been relentlessly urged forward; no continued period of rest has been accorded to me; nor like some powerful animal, have I been permitted to enter into a long period of sleep with all my functions dormant,

my tottering legs and frame being temporarily shielded from wintry blasts.

In equatorial regions occasionally I have failed to find shelter from the parching rays of a torrid sun.

Men have shunned me, but obnoxious insects have again and again been my unwelcome companions.

In all my wanderings, however, I have realized that man, by brave effort, can reconcile himself to almost any trial, provided he has the power of concentrating his thoughts.

Often as I descended the river Volga, my ears met with the cries of discontented sailors or boatmen, on the various craft that by day were continually passing the vessel on which I was descending the Volga; I say by day, for whatever lamps they had in Russia at that time, did not give sufficient light to enable them safely to proceed after sunset.

At night we generally tied up at the river bank of some village, which enabled me to see the rude distractions of the inhabitants.

I often have gained more intimate acquaint-

ance with myself, by regarding the many strange people I have encountered in my wanderings. Many of them, both uncivilized and barbarous people, amused themselves by coarse abuse of one another, which fortunately was well understood by both parties and rarely led to any serious conflict."

Ahasuerus spoke thus earnestly for more than half an hour on Russia. Occasionally he ceased speaking for a few moments, and stood in a silent reflective mood. In fact at times he seemed to be moved almost to melancholy, by the recitation or recollection of some painful incident of his adventurous life.

Especially when reminded of his almost immortality, he seemed again and again to be wrapped in the contemplation of the sad incident, which led to his unceasingly paying the penalty.

So absorbed was he at such moments, that the presence of the assembly seemed to be ignored by him; yet again he seemed to enjoy his reminiscences, while addressing the conclave. He even assured the Moderating Theologian that



this opportunity of speaking freely, had agreeably broken the recent monotony of his existence.

When Ahasuerus was about to speak again, an aged attendant, a verger, who constantly supplied the prelates with pencils, paper and quills, or slim bamboos, with which they made their pens, passed through the audience and spoke in the ear of one of the prelates. The delegate thus spoken to now addressed the Theologian saying, "Your excellence, the aged attendant who has just communicated with me, has just made a good suggestion. He says that seventy years ago when he was living in Tri-este, an Italian city on the Austrian side of the Adriatic sea, he saw this old man Ahasuerus, who then spoke with the verger's father, who was a carpenter. Then Ahasuerus informed him that his own father had followed the same occupation in Jerusalem in the first century, A. D. And that the old man had related at that time many interesting facts concerning Judea. May I presume to ask that our aged friend speak now to us on that land of Judea."

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### JUDEA

AFTER a few minutes' reflection Ahasuerus complied.

"You know of my race as traders and money-lenders; the force of circumstances I contend has made them so.

In the first century, A. D., like the rest of my people, I was an outcast, a subject of hatred, but my erratic life spared me from much persecution.

During some years under the Roman Empire, I dared not return to Jerusalem. I heard from friends coming from there, that where our fathers' altars had been raised to the living God, men then worshiped Jupiter, Juno, and many other mythological deities.

Paganism had supplanted the Jewish worship of the true God.

Though I have accustomed myself to my

cosmopolitan life, I experience now and then, that ever returning longing desire to bend my wandering feet towards my native Judea. I reach it time and again ; I stand upon its hills and view its cities.

With strange feelings of inexpressible disappointment, I see ruined battlements, new palaces, towers I had not known before. I stand among the people on the route to Joppa, or meet those coming from Bethlehem, or those on their way to Nazareth. I look into their countenances, yet can find not even a resemblance of those I knew in youth.

I now will give you incidents of my earliest return to my native Judea.

I went to Jerusalem ; I was delighted once more to visit the wonders of that magnificent temple of Solomon. At that time there was much commotion in Cesarea, between my people and the other inhabitants, touching who should have the precedence on public occasions. The Jews claimed to have that right, because, they said, that their kings had built the city ; the Syrians contended that they should be preferred,

because it was their ancestors who had previously built the towers of Straton, where afterwards Jerusalem was founded. There arose many dissensions, quarrels of words, and even blows with stones, this having occurred under the administration of Felix; the Emperor Nero at that time sent Portius Festus to succeed and replace him in the government of Judea.

When Festus arrived in Judea, he found it in a deplorable state; rascals and thieves were pillaging and destroying in every direction.

An impostor who professed magic, induced many over-confident people to go with him into the desert, promising them to deliver them from all their ills; Festus sent cavalry and infantry out after them and dispersed them.

What interested me most shortly after that time, was the construction or addition of a great apartment at the gate of the Royal Palace of Jerusalem, which was a work of the Princes Asmoneens. As the place was of great elevation the view was extremely beautiful, for from a balcony one had a view of the entire city, and Agrippa could see from his chamber all that was

going on about the temple. The municipal rulers of Jerusalem were very dissatisfied with this, because the laws of my people did not permit others to see what was going on in the temple, and particularly when sacrifices were being made.

To prevent this unwelcome inspection of the temple, they caused to be constructed on the west side of it, a wall so high that one could not see the chamber of the king, and rendering it impossible for him to see not only the interior of the temple, but also the galleries which were outside of it, on the side where the Roman soldiers were on guard for its protection.

Agrippa was very much offended, and Festus was still more displeased. They endeavored to have the wall demolished; they sent an embassy to Rome; Nero heard them, and his wife Poppæa, the empress, sympathizing with those of the temple, not only pardoned them for erecting the wall, but accorded them the right to retain it.

Among the many great edifices I have seen in all this earth, nothing can compare with that

shrine of my people's faith, Solomon's temple, as I recollect it when it stood on the hill in the great city of my fathers.

Think that I who stand before you to-day, who speak with you, have assisted in that temple at Jerusalem. Its impressive ceremonies are vividly before my mind after all these years.

When occasionally I enter your places of worship, the display, the paraphernalia, the glitter, the genuflections of your priests, all stand in great contrast with the simplicity of the temple worship of my earlier days, though even there I see vestiges of the ancient Jewish ceremonies.

As in my boyhood we had our manuscripts, Hebrew and in Parthian, so you now have your missals, books of prayer written in Latin. We Israelites were compelled to leave our loved Jerusalem, quit our native land, and adopt other places of abode. It was the will of our Creator, just as at other times when cities have been too numerous populated.

Families had become too large, the inhabitants so numerous that they were compelled to separate. Thus different races, speaking various

languages, founded communities which have become the nations which populate the world at present.

During ages while visiting all these people, I have heard of that being, who it is believed brought from far and wide, those monoliths for the Druids.

I have also learned that he created dissensions in the world. As soon as the confusion of languages had separated men into clans and nations, that wily old stone gatherer, that demon taught men ambition, envy, and hatred of one another, until war became a curse of men and communities.

From the west and south my course brought me thus through my native Judea, though I found neither parents nor friends, nor any man who knew of me, for during a hundred years I had not ceased to walk; therefore I felt more bitterly my chagrin at what seemed then to have lived so long. I often hesitated and avoided going again to Jerusalem, knowing that even there I would be a stranger. I felt unlike those who in sacred history, are said not to have be-

lieved in the efficacy of Jordan's stream, for though I had bathed in the Abana and the Pharpar, I hoped at one time, that in that sacred river Jordan, I might wash away the stain that had corroded my poor old frame. So I betook my way beyond Jericho and did bathe in the Jordan.

I was refreshed with its cooling waters, yet pained and wearied by recollections when mounting the hills, I looked down on Jericho, where Judas Iscariot once lived; incidents in his life then possessed my thoughts.

As I have already promised your reverences, I will now proceed to give you an account of that man whose baseness contributed to the condemnation and final crucifixion of Christ, in consequence of which I have suffered these long ages."



## CHAPTER XXXV

### JUDAS ISCARIOT

“ Most Eminent Theologian, you will remember the important incidents in my young life, and I hope you will be interested in the biographical sketch which I will now offer you, and which I think should be related before I conclude this narrative of my itinerant career.

The father of Judas was of the tribe of Reuben. He was born at a small village near the Dead Sea, but came to establish himself in an humble way at Jerusalem. He was a gardener, and carried on some trade in land and trees. When his wife was about to give birth to Judas, she dreamt that she would bring into the world an infant holding a crown in his hand. That he would cast that crown on the ground, and break it with his feet, that he probably would attack his father, and even deprive that parent of life, that he would go to the temple, and break up all the ornaments, carrying away whatever things were of value, and would then disappear. She

awoke very much alarmed at such a terrible revelation ; she recounted it to her husband, who went everywhere asking what it could signify. At last he found a wise man, who told him that he would have a son who would kill the king, and his own father, and would be possessed of such a passion for getting money that he would not hesitate at the commission of all imaginable crimes.

When the father of the expected child heard this explanation he was very much grieved ; to avoid trouble and prevent such a misfortune, he and his wife resolved between themselves, that as soon as the child should be born, they would place it in a casket on the river, that the current might carry it away.

Everything occurred as they had expected ; they gave the child the name of Judas ; when he was ten days old he was carried by his father to the river ; the casket containing Judas was driven by the winds to the island of Candia.

The king of that island preceived the floating package on the water ; he sent attendants to see what it contained,

On opening it they found a beautiful child, to whom they gave some refreshment to strengthen it, for having been without nourishment it was very weak.

The king ordered that the child should be brought up in his household. When the infant attained the age of six years, they also called it Judas, because they observed by his garments that he was a Jew child.

Judas was raised as a companion to the son of the king; the young prince was a year the senior of Judas. As they became older the prince noticed that Judas was taking money and things of value from him to such an extent that he was accustoming himself to steal. The young prince spoke to the king, his father, about it; the king called Judas to him and had him immediately searched; they found on him money, rings of great price, and some jewels which he had taken from the queen and the prince. On discovering this the king had him whipped, and then he said to him, 'You are not my son, as people may imagine from your position in my family; you are a foundling whom we have saved from the

water, and you have only been raised in the court out of charity.'

Judas at these words was so enraged at heart, on finding that he was not what he had supposed himself to be, that he resolved to be revenged, because he imagined that the young prince was the cause of his misfortune. He watched his opportunity to settle with the prince. The occasion soon presented itself; going to walk in a little wood, he took a club and struck the prince a great blow on the head, and killed him; having done that he concealed himself during three days and four nights.

At last he took flight to the seashore, where he found a little vessel going to Egypt. After remaining there for some months, he returned afoot to Jeruśalem. There he sought a new position for himself, and finally succeeded in securing a place in service near to a great lord; being a Jew which he did not know himself until then, he was taught the laws of the Jews and the customs of Israel.

He continued to be dishonest in the smallest matters. Some time afterwards his master sent

him to buy some apples from a garden, directing him to a certain house; this house proved to be that of his father, but he did not recognize it. As he was always trying to gain money, by whatever means possible, instead of going to the house as directed, he climbed the wall, and began to pick the apples.

The man of the house who equally did not recognize his son, accidentally came into the garden, and finding the boy there said, 'Why, my boy, do you come and steal my apples?' And then the father, unknown to him, addressed him some words of reproach, upon which Judas became angry, caught him by the head, and struck him such a blow that he left him for dead under the tree. Then he gathered up the apples, and went unconcernedly away.

The next day his mother came to complain to his master, that her husband was at death's door, from blows that the youth had given to him. Judas was then taken before a magistrate, and a very strange sentence pronounced upon him, in this wise, that in case of the death of the husband, Judas should marry the widow.

The father soon died ; Judas was married to the widow, and received the name of Iscariot. Judas was about to live with this widow, whom the magistrate had forced him to marry, when undressing to retire at night, the widow, now his betrothed bride, perceived when he took off his stockings, that two of his toes were attached to one another. She uttered a cry, ' O Lord, I see that my dream was too true, and that it has been accomplished.' His ears also, like the ears of the child they had placed on the river, were close to his cheeks.

The more this woman regarded Judas the more she found in his physiognomy that it was her son, and besides that, there were gray spots in the temples just as her son had had. Behold how Judas was recognized ! Discovering the relationship he quit his wife, and strove to repent, and lead a better life.

This was he who in manhood afterwards treasonably sold the Saviour of Man for a price ; and to whom I owe the continuance of my wandering existence."

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### BIRTHPLACE OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE

"I WILL now give you more details of my early visits to my native land. After various changes in the government of my country, in one of my visits to Jerusalem, I walked to the various villages in the north, east and south. I went to Bethlehem, and found it no longer the little hamlet I had known a hundred years before. All the way, however, reminded me of an adventure in which I participated when a boy. I knew every turn in that road, as I had followed it on the eventful occasion which I will now relate to you.

I am returning now to my first recital of events in my childhood. I was about nine or ten years when I heard my father say to my mother that three kings had passed through Jerusalem, and that they were seeking to obtain information of the newly born king, Jesus, as

they wished to go and worship him. They said that until then nobody had been able to inform them where that birth had taken place. They had, however, learned that perhaps they might find that child in Bethlehem.

Being curious to see these three kings, boy-like, I informed myself of the route or direction which they had been seen to take on leaving Jerusalem. Searching for them, I overtook them on the old road which conducted to Bethlehem, between the hills. I looked at all three ; one of them was a negro of middle stature, from Ethiopia ; the other two were large and tall, one of them was older than the other ; as they had only quitted the city in the afternoon, they were overtaken by darkness ; however, there appeared a star which gave a light as brilliant as the moon, and seemed to be fully as large.

Usually in my country after the setting of the sun, men seek repose. This night the rumor of the visiting dignitaries had preceded them, so that the party received greetings from shepherds passing the nights with their flocks in the neighboring fields ; herdsmen also brought their cattle



nearer the public way, to see the cortège pass ; peasantry looked up from the fires, where they were heating the broth for those who were to guard during the night. They added their salutations to constant expressions of curiosity at seeing such a caravan.

We went by a certain road which I afterwards could not find again, the light of that star having dazzled my eyes. I was all this time afoot, while the royal personages and their attendants were mounted on camels.

After a while we perceived that the star seemed to stop over a small house ; the kings, having also noticed that phenomenon, dismounted from their camels, and entered into the building indicated. They were soon followed by their retinue, carrying presents.

I supposed that I was going into a fine establishment ; having entered with the royal suite, I soon discovered that it was only a stable. Being a boy, and too short to see over the shoulders of the men, and as they were crowded together it was impossible for me to see over them, so I stooped down and looking between their

legs, I saw a beautiful young woman holding a little child on her lap.

The three kings prostrated themselves on the earth before her, in the act of adoration. I did not long have the pleasure of seeing what occurred ; unfortunately for me, some one stepped with a coarse sandal on my hand ; it bled so freely that I was obliged to retire with much suffering ; though anxious to get out, I had difficulty in pushing through on account of the kings, and the number of their followers. For the same reason every bed in the town of Bethlehem was occupied. As I could not see my way back to Jerusalem, I waited around the town until dawn of the day, when I returned to my father's house, and gave him an account of what I had seen. My father was very much surprised when I told him that the young woman whom I had seen holding the young child on her lap, was the wife of the carpenter, with whom he had worked on a certain house not long before. 'O my God !' cried my father, 'that must be Joseph !' I replied to him, 'I do not know anything more, father, only that I have seen you



Maxwellton, Tenn.  
Jan 1902.



working together on the same building,' for so Joseph and my father gained their livelihood.

And the child born in that stable became the man whom I refused to help, whose simple plea I rejected."

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### AMERICA,—MEXICO

“CENTURIES after that visit to Judea, I strolled through the islands of the Ægean Sea. Again through Byzantion, afterwards in Wallachia, visiting its capital Cimpulungŭ, listening to the peculiar music of the stringed instruments of those half-civilized people. Then at the city of Argish, and visiting the peasantry in towns of Moldavia and Carpathia. Thence along the frontier on the seacoast of Turkey in Asia.

From the Black Sea I ascended the river Danube; passing its perilous rocks I continued my journey, crossing the entire continent of Europe, in time to arrive in Spain, when Ferdinand and Isabella were listening, with willing ear, to that great mariner whom all other sovereigns thought to be a dreamer.

So have I found that men often lack confidence in the most important theories of great

men, simply because they have not the intellect to appreciate their value."

The Theologian here interrupted the aged speaker, asking him, "Whence come you now, my much traveled friend?" Ahasuerus replied, "It may surprise your reverences, but I have recently come from that newly-discovered world of red men.

A little more than thirty years ago, in the last decade of the fifteenth century, Christopher Columbus made known in Europe the important problem he had conceived in regard to the existence of a land beyond the seas.

Fortunately he found patrons in Spain, and at that time they were the best rulers that country had ever known.

The administration of Ferdinand and Isabella was an honest government; there was no dissimulation; every act was really in the interests of the people, intended to bind together those elements which had almost been severed, by the errors of previous rulers. The nation was thus enabled to act harmoniously as one family, instead of being disintegrated by civil conflicts.

The example of the private character of those monarchs was a blessing, and a profitable lesson for the Spanish people, who with great respect for Ferdinand and Isabella, awoke to a course of proper ambition and progress, contrasting favorably with the condition of the nation under many predecessors.

Ferdinand was robust, and had by temperate life, preserved his health. When I heard him speak before the Cortes, I was impressed by the harmony and power of his royal voice. The beautiful feature in his regal administration was that he and the queen were in accord. Isabella had the wisdom to endear herself both to her noble subjects, and to find an honored place in the hearts of her people.

When she spoke the Castilian language the ears of all educated Spaniards were enchanted. They had then reason to be delighted and proud, on account of the great discoveries of Columbus.

At the time of my visit Columbus had already been fortunate in his enterprise, having made two successful voyages, thanks to Ferdinand and



Isabella. I had been continually inspired with the desire to visit that new world. This was difficult for me to accomplish, as Columbus by this time found more volunteers than before his success.

On arriving in Spain, I heard again and everywhere, on every tongue, of that courageous navigator.

With alacrity I approached Columbus and offered my services for another voyage. On giving evidence of my powers of endurance, and knowledge of all other countries, I showed him my sinewy arms; he noticed my steady head, and finally engaged me as a member of his third expedition for which he had already accepted about fifty mariners.

With those early adventurers I also trod the Western islands, and the Columbian continent.

Meeting with strange sights on every hand, among the redskins with painted bodies and faces, and heads decorated with highly colored feathers and bright shells. Here-again the evidence that man wherever we find him, is inclined to adopt some form of worship, and if it be not

to an unseen god, that divine spirit is supplied by images carved in wood or stone.

Before such deities those savages on the islands and the mainland, bowed daily down. At other times they joined hands and danced about rude stone altars, from whose embers sparks of fire rose to the invisible power, with the exultant cries and prayers of those aborigines of that new found land.

When I entered Mexico, it was to me a land of wonder and delight. The lowlands ever pleased me, but the charm came when inland I mounted from terrace to terrace, and gained height after height.

At Tenochtitlan, and before Cholula, where I stood in the temple of Quetzalcoatl, in the beautiful gardens of Iztapalapan, I took in the grand view of Mexico. On other days my eyes feasted on the sumptuous palace of Montezuma, on the heights Chapultepec which also commanded a grand view.

When I stood in the capital of their sovereign ruler, I beheld edifices indicating a civilization even grander than Palmyra, and as I went among

the Mexican people seeing their great monuments, it seemed that man had appropriated every eminence, and built defenses commanding a view of every approach to the seat of government, on whose palaces and temples the glorious sun, that had yesterday lighted Jerusalem, shone now in all its effulgence on these edifices of the ancient Aztecs. .

Some years before this, my visit to Mexico, a great military expedition under Axayacatl had been made to procure victims for the altars of the principal cities under the rule of Montezuma.

I saw a wonderful procession of priests when I attended one of these great festivals. It was a ceremony which they told me occurred twice in a century; it was the festival at the close of a period of fifty-two years.

It was near the last days of the year, when the sun daily shortened its visits. The people had, during generations, been accustomed to meet together at such a time, to await the new days as they commenced to lengthen. Everything was put in order, or as the men esteemed

it, in disorder, in their houses ; their crockery was destroyed to make way for new dishes, their garments, and even their household deities were relegated to the past. Then came the day for the ceremony at which I was present. The priests, dressed as gods, even ceased to keep burning the holy fires in the temple that they also might be renewed ; and leaving the city, ascended to a terrace on a mountain, bringing with them a captive whom they tortured and sacrificed with fire.

When the appearance in the sky of certain stars rendered the sacrifice most auspicious, they laid the victim out on a stone slab of jasper, and kindled on his naked breast a fire of cedar, withes, and fagots. It was the fire of the new era ; slowly the fearful element consumed the poor victim.

This ceremony, terrible as it appeared to me, delighted the multitude ; their countenances brightened with the light of the flames, and their voices announced their joy to the heavens !

As I passed through the country, I found

many tribes rejoicing in that brutal festival which opened up to them new years of hope.

Many times I looked at their war-god, Huitzilopochtli. I crossed the water of Anahuac. I mounted to their great city Tenochtitlan ; passing on the lake Tescuco, I found great evidences of earlier and present civilization, the architecture, their buildings, and what surprised me most, their thorough administration of justice.

Their sculptured stones sometimes of polished onyx, and of jasper, were remarkable types of primitive art.

I leave to the imagination of your excellencies, how much I was impressed on seeing in that hitherto unknown world, such a vast and enterprising population. I stopped to wonder how these people had established themselves on that to us, new continent, without our ever having dreamed of their existence. Finding I was losing myself in thought, I looked out silently on the great monuments, on the plains below me, and accepted all those marvels without longer demanding whence they originated.

True, some of the tribes of my scattered race

have been unaccounted for; I therefore sought for Israelites. I detected their features occasionally, but not a trace of the religion of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### CENTRAL AMERICA AND PERU

“ ON peninsulas, through a narrow belt of land lying between two great oceans, with here and there a village, and again a town from whose battlements I could look down upon the sea, thus I went through lands since known as Guatemala and Yucatan.

In this connecting link of the great western hemisphere, I viewed already cities in ruin, endeavored to decipher the rudely cut hieroglyphic records of more ancient people, more evidence of an earlier and wonderful civilization.

Your reverence has asked me, how I could converse with and understand all the various people whom I have visited. I must confess that reaching this point on the new continent, I found the language of the aborigines almost incomprehensible to me. Yet my knowledge of so many idioms enabled me to pursue my way.

I heard words, and I saw manners and customs, that reminded me of Eastern Asia. I found they had strange traditions recorded in picture text; one remarkable symbolic Aztec tradition reminded me of those legendary trees grown from the bitter apple seeds placed under Adam's tongue, from the wood of which that Cross was hewn.

Here the Aztecs had chiseled representations of four trees, with a strange legendary history, they having from all time indicated the points of the compass.

On each tree there was a single bird, one looking to the north, another to the south, one looking to the east, and a fourth indicating the west.

I traversed the peaceful lands of the race of Incas, visiting their habitations; there I found an interesting people, and remains of a great nation resembling in many ways the ancient Egyptians; especially did I see evidences of the similarity of the objects unearthed by inundations from the mountain torrents; in many shattered tombs sitting mummies were disclosed,



rudely ornamented earthenware, and inscribed stones.

I saw Cyclopean ruins of enormous buildings at Tiahuanaco, near a great lake. I was there two years ago when Pizarro moved on to the seacoast on the west. During a long period throughout that interesting South American country, the Incas performed religious services, in which they followed strictly the forms prescribed in their manuscripts of rites. They worshiped the sun, the moon, the rainbow, and the evening star; naturally they made their obeisance daily before the sun, when it favored them with its effulgent rays. They knew of a supreme deity Pachacamac, to whom they only reared one temple in all the realm, in a valley near the Pacific coast.

Multitudes of pilgrims gathered there in ancient times, and during three days knelt in earnest devotion.

Temples to their chief deity, the sun, were, however, to be seen wherever I wandered. The idea was beautiful, that wherever the orb of day bestowed his brilliant rays, they believed that it

was due to his august godship, that a temple should raise its spiral tower in honor of the sun, the glory and the beauty of the day. Their aspirations, their prayers, were equally addressed to the moon, whom they esteemed as the sister and wife of the greater source of light.

Their festivals were very imposing; those adventurous travelers whom I encountered, and who had made the voyage with Columbus, spoke of the religion of the Aztecs, whom they had seen, as of a higher order than that of any other forms of worship practiced on this Western hemisphere.

The Inca was not only the ruling temporal power governing those people; he was esteemed by them as the representative of the adored sun. He was their spiritual ruler, and as such was believed to receive his inspiration from the sun; his decrees were even supposed to emanate from that brilliant source.

His race and family were revered as sacred, although they certainly lived polygamous lives. All the people, noble or plebeian, adored them. Their temples in Cuzco were raised in honor of

their deities; their temple of the sun was resplendent with golden slabs; unlike the altars in Mexico, those Peruvian sacred halls were never tarnished with the taint of human blood; such brutal sacrifices were even strictly forbidden by the Incas.

The Peruvian art objects frequently lying exposed in the débris of more ancient ruins, reminded me of many things I had seen in the land of the Pharaohs.

I also admired their cunningly made deities in gold and silver; judging from all the religious objects I saw, they evidently had never heard of your Christ. Just now those who have accompanied Pizarro, have announced the tidings to them.

From what I saw among those who have professed the new religion of your Church, I confess to you that when I compared their conduct with the life of those who held on to the religion of their fathers, I asked myself would it not, perhaps, have been better, could they have remained uninformed.

There were two orders of nobility in Peru. The Incas were proud of their descent from their

sovereign ancestors. As they lived in polygamy, they had numerous offspring, the most of whom counted upon favors from the ruling power. The males were recognized only, they alone received appointments in the priesthood; they wore a peculiar dress, and were very exclusive; they partook of the royal repasts, and were almost exempt from punishment, in fact they were esteemed incapable of doing serious wrong.

Throughout the country were ancient battlefields; war had evidently been resorted to both by acts of aggression and defense. On many of these fields, and at every village, temples of your faith constructed of adobe, bore the emblem of the cross. Yet it was a question to my mind whether your emissaries were a blessing to those people."

The Theologian here interrupted the old man, saying, "Noticing the sentiments you have twice recently expressed, permit me to ask you, was not that a noble work? Were not those holy men earnest and brave?"

Ahasuerus reflected for an instant and then replied, "Your eminence, naturally from your

point of view, with your sectarian prejudices it seems so to you. You see, and have known already before I have spoken to you, that by the power of military arms, your propagandists have forced those innocent people of Peru to turn their backs on the religion of their ancestors, and to accept your faith and rites. Would you have my unbiased opinion, I must say your emissaries are brave, yet inspired by an unwarranted zeal, again and again that same error of unwise narrowness, not realizing that the religion of our neighbors should be considered and respected.

Your excellencies, I can hardly understand that I, a poor Israelite shoemaker, the son of a carpenter, have lived so long, and that such opportunities have been afforded me to learn and to know this earth.

I have lived to see the emissaries of the Church, the dispensers of your faith throughout the civilized world, that faith of that divine man whom I repulsed.

Some have attributed my long life to the ancient belief that there existed a fountain at

which if one drank three times, he should see many many days, and that when such a man attained a hundred years, and continued drinking from that fountain, he should live a thousand years and by continuing his visits to that source there should be no limit to his existence on earth. No, your reverence, I have never drank of that fountain, rather would I have taken a portion from a death-giving spring.

Perhaps I have satisfied you with my long narrative; its recital has brought to my mind this legend of the fountain. It occurs to me occasionally, when I realize the time it has taken me to see, and to form some idea of this wide world.



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Your excellencies, my story is told, it is yours ;  
I must resume my wanderings, I must leave  
you. The day is spent ; a veil of mist will now  
descend as a curtain between you and Ahasuerus,  
leaving you to wonder that I have remembered  
so little of the great round earth. That I have  
recorded so few of the important events that  
have been inscribed on its milestones.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ahasuerus is known to have appeared afterwards at Brussels  
in Brabant in 1774.





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